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THE ALL DIGITAL BUSINESS COMPUTER MAGAZINE

Published by: Possibility Media

Business Computing MAGAZINE

September 2005 • $6.95

The Nokia 770 Internet Tablet Is Perfect For PC Neophytes and Beginers

Plantronics M2500 Headset Is Perfect For Talking On The Road!

Canon's EOS Digital Rebel XT Camera Is One Amazing Unit, Great Features & Pics!

SMARTPHONES ARE TERRIFIC!

Motorola'S i605 and V551 Are Really Great Phones-Win An Editor's Choice & Best Buy Award!

SECURE VPN

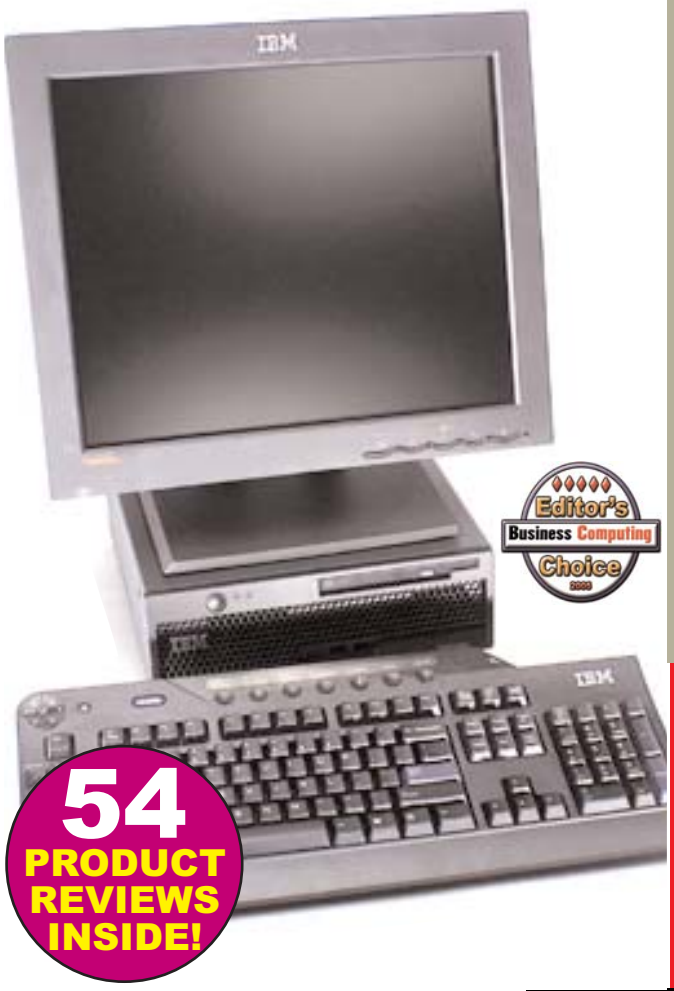
The Aventail EX-1500 is a VPN appliance with unique and iron-clad remote protection techniques.

STORAGE

nStor's NextStor 4900F Series Is A 2Gbit Fibre Channel Unit With 2.8 GB of Capacity - It Our Editor's Choice!

PRINTERS

Lexmark's P4350 Is A Very Affordable MFP!



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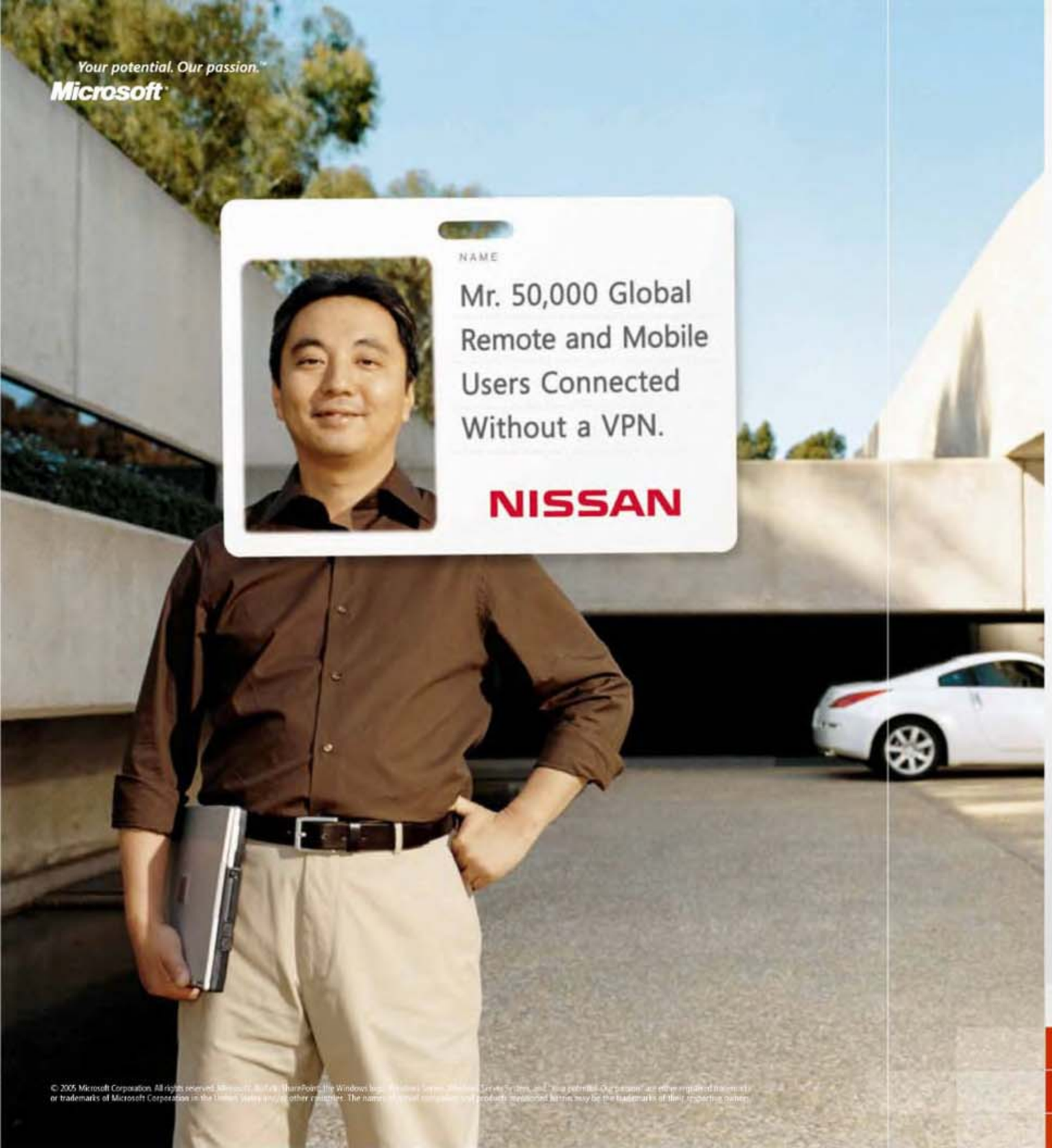
We Think The Acer Travelmate 3200 Notebook Is A Powerhouse For Road Warriors, It's Sleek, Light And Gets Our Best In Class Award!



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"At Nissan, we expect to save at least $135 million annually thanks to the efficiencies that Windows Server 2003 and Exchange Server 2003 are helping us achieve."

Toshihiko Suda
Senior Manager, *Nissan Motor Company, Ltd.*

Make a name for yourself with Windows Server System. An upgrade to Microsoft Windows Server System made it possible for 50,000 worldwide employees at Nissan Motor Company to have more secure remote access to their e-mail and calendars from any Internet connection, without the hassle and expense of a VPN. Here's how: By deploying Windows Server 2003 and Exchange 2003, not only did Nissan IT meet the CEO's demand for better global collaboration, they expect to save at least $135 million by streamlining their messaging infrastructure. To get the full Nissan story or find a Microsoft Certified Partner, go to **microsoft.com/wssystem**

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	Microsoft® Operations Manager
Security	Internet Security & Acceleration Server

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ISSUE 2
SEPTEMBER
2005

BUSINESS COMPUTING MAGAZINE

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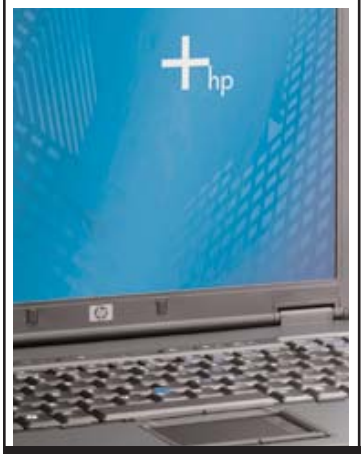

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BUSINESS COMPUTING

Editorial

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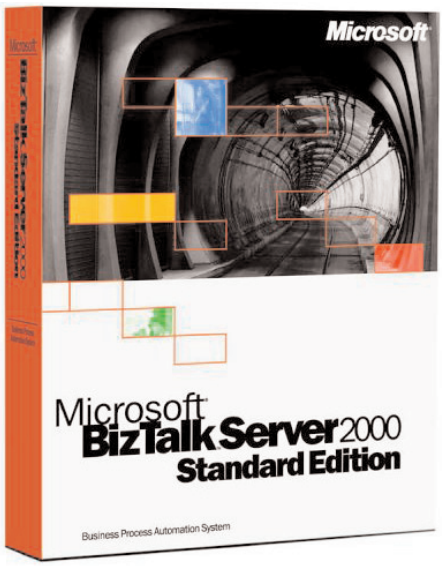
Microsoft Corporate Treasury Connects to Its Banks Via SWIFTNet

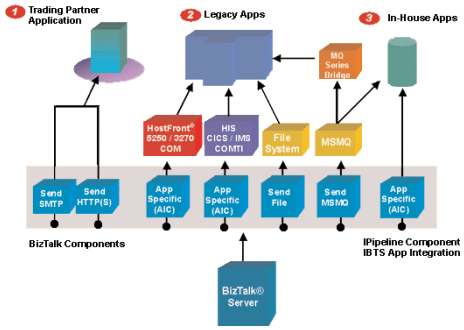
Today at Sibos 2005 Copenhagen, Microsoft Corp announced that its corporate treasury department will link with its banking partners over SWIFTNet, SWIFT's more reliable, security-enhanced messaging platform. Microsoft is undertaking this project, which is scheduled to begin in December, to achieve greater daily visibility of its global bank account transactions, to help ensure operational efficiency, and to help prevent any opportunities for fraud to occur, in line with industry regulations such as Sarbanes-Oxley.

The implementation will provide Microsoft with a centralised view of its 1,200 bank accounts by enabling the firm to receive daily bank account balance and transaction data electronically from all its banking partners, via their SWIFT connections, directly into its SAP R/3 Corporate Finance Management (CFM). This centralised resource is designed to reduce the number of systems and data silos currently in operation, creating a standardised and efficient approach to Microsoft's financial processes. Furthermore, the project will allow Microsoft to transform SAP CFM into a central reconciliation tool, helping the company close its books in a more timely and accurate fashion.

Microsoft will interface with its banks over SWIFTNet using Microsoft(R) BizTalk(R) Server, Microsoft BizTalk Accelerator for SWIFT and Microsoft BizTalk Server Adapter for Web Services Enhancements. The solution will allow end-to-end straight-through processing from Microsoft's treasury systems to SWIFTNet connectivity.



A Microsoft Office InfoPath(R) application hosted on Microsoft Office SharePoint(R) Portal Server will be used to enter information in a user-friendly format and send that data to SWIFTNet via Microsoft BizTalk Server. The result should be a significant reduction in the time and cost associated with Microsoft's banking transactions.



"Like all corporate treasury departments, Microsoft is looking for richer and more timely information, error reduction, and better reconciliation of its financial position. With this new SWIFT-based solution, we think we will be able to achieve just that," said George Zinn, vice president, Treasury, at Microsoft.

George Zinn

"We are delighted to be working closely with Microsoft on this project and hope that this will encourage other multinational corporations to follow suit," said Leonard H Schrank, CEO of SWIFT. "This is a strong indicator that our corporate-to-bank strategy is really gaining traction. I am sure our Corporate Access Group, with senior executives drawn from our largest global members, will be encouraged by this important development."

"This is the perfect showcase for BizTalk Server's Accelerator for SWIFT to demonstrate the complete range of access options it provides to SWIFTNet and SWIFTSolutions," said Ted Kummert, corporate vice president of the Connected Systems Division at Microsoft. "BizTalk Server 2006 will further help Microsoft Corporate Treasury automate business processes and integrate financial messaging while lowering costs. We expect to take advantage of the emerging standards provided by SWIFTSolutions."

"Citigroup offers a wide array of advanced application choices and connectivity solutions to address integration of ERP and treasury systems for our diverse and global client base," said Gary Greenwald, managing director of Information Products at Global Transaction Services, a division of Citigroup Corporate and Investment Banking. "SWIFTNet is a robust, more reliable and security-enhanced connectivity option that we have been offering to our corporate clients for about two years. As a banking partner of Microsoft and other global firms, Citigroup is very pleased to be able offer to our significant expertise in transaction and messaging integration via SWIFTNet, as well as delivering liquidity-related information through other advanced platforms such as CitiDirect and TreasuryVision."

Microsoft is an active partner of SWIFT, and the company's technology is widely used by financial institutions and corporates for their day-to-day operations over the SWIFT network.

Journalists and conference delegates are invited to attend an informal Q&A session, photo opportunity and champagne reception on Tuesday, 6 Sept, at 5:30 p.m., at Microsoft stand C355 at the SIBOS conference. Leonard H Schrank of SWIFT; Ed Barrie, senior product manager at Microsoft; and David Littlewood, global managing director of Financial Services at Microsoft, will be on hand to discuss this announcement in more detail.

Broadband Networked Households Present Sizeable, Lucrative Target for Digital Electronics Vendors

A new study from The Diffusion Group, the leading strategic research consultancy focused on the digital home and connected consumer, finds that US households that have both a broadband connection and a home network are much more likely to either own or be inclined to purchase new digital electronic platforms.

The Diffusion Group

Broadband Networked Households: Profiling the New Media Home, the latest of TDG's Consumer Snapshots, also finds the broadband networked households are moving from single- to multi-unit penetration in digital consumer electronic categories. For example, 29% of broadband networked households now own three or more DVD players, up from 13% in 2004.

"By year-end 2005, there will be approximately 25 million US broadband networked households - a sizeable and influential segment of consumers," says Dale Gilliam, director of primary research at TDG and co-author of the new study. "But describing broadband networked households is no longer simply a matter of describing early technology adopters - it is more about consumer electronic and media purchasing habits than it is new technology adoption. Simply stated, broadband networked households tend to own significantly more media devices than other US households. Of course, these devices are increasingly digital, but this has more to do with price reductions and peer group recommendations than with early adopter tendencies such as novelty or first-adopter status."

TDG's latest report, Broadband Networked Households: Profiling the New Media Home, provides a comprehensive overview of consumer electronic ownership among US households that use both a broadband connection and a home network. The study also includes a detailed, room-by-room snapshot of device location within the home for consumer electronic devices including DVD players, PVRs/DVRs, stand-alone home stereos, stereo speakers, TVs, game consoles, desktop PCs, and laptop PCs. The report also includes trending data on the penetration of a variety of consumer electronic devices within the various rooms of the home.

Business

FairPoint Completes Bentleyville Communications Acquisition

FairPoint Communications, Inc. announced today that it has completed a merger with Bentleyville Communications Corporation, by which Bentleyville becomes a subsidiary of FairPoint. The net cost of this merger to FairPoint is $9.3 million.

Bentleyville, in operation for more than 90 years, provides telecommunications, cable and Internet services to rural areas of southwestern Pennsylvania. Bentleyville has approximately 3,600 access line equivalents currently in operation.

"We are excited to make Bentleyville a part of FairPoint's growing network, and we look forward to offering new products and services to this customer base," said Gene Johnson, FairPoint's CEO. "Today's transaction is in line with our strategy to focus on increasing shareholder value through a combination of organic and external growth. We are committed to pursuing opportunities that improve our cash available to pay dividends and enhance our operating position within existing regions."

Bentleyville is one of two Rural Local Exchange Carriers (RLECs) FairPoint currently operates in Pennsylvania. FairPoint acquired Marianna and Scenery Hill Telephone Company in September of 2001. These RLECs are contiguous to each other, with both located in the southwest corner of the state.

Strong Hybrid and IP PBX Sales Drive PBX Market Up 12%

Worldwide PBX/KTS revenue grew 12% to $1.6 billion between the first and second quarters of 2005, and is forecast to total close to $7 billion in 2005, according to Infonetics Research's new Enterprise Telephony report.

TDM equipment revenue is expected to plummet, from $2.8 billion in 2003 to $759 million in 2008, but the overall market is growing due to strong IP PBX sales, which jumped 17% to $1.2 billion in 2Q05. Worldwide hybrid PBX revenue will nearly triple and pure IP PBX more than quadruple between 2003 and 2008.

"This was a very solid quarter for the PBX market," said Matthias Machowinski, directing analyst at Infonetics Research. "All vendors had a positive quarter, and most of them grew in the solid double-digits. The battle for IP PBX line market share in North America continues, with Nortel leading and Cisco passing Avaya this quarter."

Sun Microsystems Completes Acquisition of StorageTek

Sun Microsystems, Inc. today announced it has completed its acquisition of StorageTek following approval of StorageTek stockholders. Under the terms of the agreement, StorageTek stockholders will receive $37 per share in cash for each StorageTek share for an aggregate value of approximately $4.1 billion, including the assumption of employee stock options. Trading of StorageTek common stock has been suspended.

Scott McNealy

"By combining with StorageTek and leveraging its 35 years of leadership in the storage and data management market with Sun's 24 years in network computing solutions, Sun becomes an instant heavyweight in the global storage market," said Scott McNealy, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Sun Microsystems, Inc. "Few companies are better positioned to help enterprises manage the complexities of information management. StorageTek knows how to store it and Sun knows how to put that data to work better than any other company on the planet."

Business

The Sun-StorageTek combination:

* Creates a global leader in network computing and data management with combined revenues of $13.3 billion for the last 12 months, and whose products hold 36% of the world's total archived data;

* Instantly expands the addressable customer base, providing significant new channels for each company's products and services around the globe;

* Provides customers with flexibility and choice in storage and data management offerings for heterogeneous environments, coupled with robust identity management and security solutions, drawing upon the combined companies' long history of innovation and proven data center expertise;

* Delivers shareholder value through access to significant growth opportunities in the storage market and an expanded sales force with a broader product and services portfolio.

Mark Canepa

With the close of the acquisition, StorageTek becomes a part of Sun's Data Management Group (DMG), formerly named Sun's Network Storage Group (NWS). This newly formed organization will be led by Mark Canepa, Executive Vice President, Data Management Group. Canepa, a 30 year tech veteran, has put the vision, strategy and leadership team in place to leverage Sun's powerful new position in the global storage market.

The DMG consists of three distinct business units – Disk, Tape, and ILMS (Information Lifecycle Management Solutions) – that are supported by world-class storage sales and services organizations, as well as data management experts committed to innovation in software, hardware and solutions development. The DMG leadership team is comprised of former StorageTek executives from sales, services and product development and marketing, along with members of Sun's storage team.

Kathleen Holmgren

Leading the three key business units are: Kathleen Holmgren, Vice President, Disk Business; Nigel Dessau, Vice President, Tape Business; and Brenda Zawatski, Vice President, ILMS Business. The business units will be supported with world-class storage sales and services organizations, led by Michael McClay, Vice President of Data Management Sales, and Eula Adams, Vice President, Data Management Services. Dessau, Zawatski, McClay and Adams join Sun from StorageTek.

In marking the close of the acquisition Canepa said, "Combining our strength in network identity with the world's deepest core competence in data archiving and information lifecycle management is a sweet spot that competitors simply cannot match. The intersection of the two is where our customers are headed, and where we plan to lead the industry."

Canepa continued, "I am thoroughly impressed with the top notch leadership team cultivated at StorageTek. Sun is very fortunate to have the opportunity to bring many of the company's key executives to the DMG leadership team and I'm confident that they will be making critical contributions to our future success in delivering solutions that meet out customers' storage and data management challenges."

StorageTek's former CEO, Pat Martin, will not be joining the combined company.

With the combined portfolios of two industry leaders, Sun now has all the building blocks to bring real value to information lifecycle management (ILM), including award-winning automated tape solutions, leading software and disk arrays, a comprehensive identity management product suite for virtually unmatched security, and leading-edge virtualization solutions. Based on lessons learned in heterogeneous mainframe and open systems environments, Sun will continue to develop repeatable methodologies, blueprints, and reference architectures that support all enterprises.

Sun and StorageTek are synergistic in product sets and solutions with very little overlap. The disk and manage-

Go to Contents

ment software areas are where product collaboration can be achieved and Sun expects to do this within the next two months.

Industry Analysts, Partners and Customers Praise Combination:

"Sun's acquisition of StorageTek creates a new player in the storage industry. The strength of StorageTek's data protection and recovery solutions and global, storage-focused sales specialists combined with Sun's more complete set of primary storage solutions creates an end-to-end set of multi-platform offerings and capabilities that is substantially better prepared to meet today's demanding and varied storage requirements," said John McArthur, Group Vice President and General Manager of IDC's Information Infrastructure division.

"Symantec has a long-standing partnership and strong software OEM/reseller business with both StorageTek and Sun," said Niall Wall, Vice President, Business Development and Alliances, Symantec. "We are excited about the synergies we expect from Sun's acquisition of StorageTek since this will allow us to combine Sun's leading server and storage assets with Symantec's data, storage and server management, availability and security software to deliver world class enterprise solutions."

"Data storage systems and software from Sun and StorageTek have allowed us to deliver effective, cost-efficient storage and retrieval of massive quantities of patient data," said Dr. Robert Cecil, Network Director, Radiology and Cardiology for the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. "Both companies have provided pieces of the solution. With Sun's acquisition of StorageTek, the combined company will be able to provide the complete solution. It's an outstanding opportunity for them to provide a continuum of solutions that marry disk and tape storage, especially when the growth of data greatly outpaces the increases in disk storage capacity alone. Tape backup remains an important part of the equation to handle exploding data growth cost effectively, especially for those of us in the medical community."

"As a partner of both Sun and StorageTek, Engenio sees this combination as a major win for customers and partners alike, as it expands Sun's storage solutions portfolio," said Flavio Santoni, Engenio Senior Vice President of Worldwide Sales, Marketing and Customer Support. "Following the acquisition, Engenio storage platforms will expand across the spectrum of Sun's storage portfolio and Sun customers will have a broader family of modular solutions to choose from to tackle tough problems like compliance, consolidation and content management in their open enterprises."

StorageTek's financial results will be included in Sun's consolidated financial statements from the date of close, to September 25, the end of Sun's fiscal 2006, first quarter. Sun expects the transaction to be accretive to non-GAAP earnings in the first 12 months.

Harris Corporation to Acquire Leitch Technology Corporation

Harris Corporation has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire all of the shares of Leitch Technology Corporation at a C$14.00 cash price per share. Total price consideration, net of cash on hand, will be approximately US$450 million. Harris expects the transaction to be neutral to fiscal year 2006 earnings per share, excluding acquisition-related charges. In fiscal year 2007, the transaction is expected to be accretive by $.06 earnings per share.

Leitch is a global leader in providing high-performance video systems for the television broadcast industry, including routers and distribution equipment, signal processing, signal management and monitoring, servers and storage area networks, branding software and post-production editing systems. Harris is the worldwide leader in providing digital broadcast technology solutions for global broadcast media markets, including television and radio transmission systems, networking solutions and enterprise-wide software and media management systems.

Howard L. Lance

"The acquisition further positions our company to lead the broadcast industry's transition to high-definition digital services," said Howard L. Lance, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Harris. "Their broad product portfolio provides an

excellent complement to our current products and software, and significantly expands our presence in these fast- growing market segments. Leitch has a veteran management team with strong domain knowledge and has launched important new products to meet the changing needs of the digital marketplace. Our combined products and systems

encoda

serve every segment of the increasingly complex supply chain that brings digital audio, video, and data content to consumers. The acquisition of Leitch, following our acquisition of Encoda Systems in November 2004, clearly establishes Harris as the company that broadcasters turn to as they upgrade their equipment and software systems to operate in a digital environment."

Tim Thorsteinson

"The combination of Leitch Technology and Harris Corporation will create a powerful force in the global broadcast industry. We view the opportunity as extremely positive for our employees, customers, and shareholders," said Tim Thorsteinson, president and chief executive officer of Leitch Technology.

HARRIS

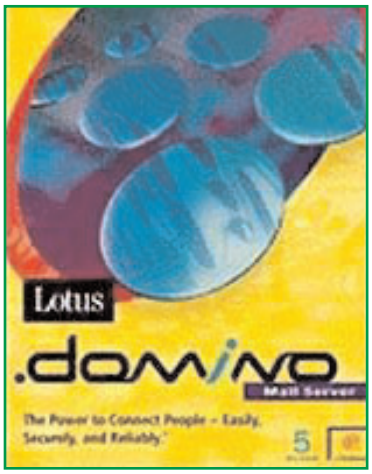
The acquisition is to be completed by way of a statutory plan of arrangement and is subject to approval by Leitch shareholders, customary regulatory and court approvals, and other closing conditions. The transaction is expected to close in approximately 60 days.

Harris will host a conference call today at 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time, to discuss the above items. Interested individuals are invited to listen to the call by using a dial-in number: (719) 457-2617, access code: 5466810. Presentation materials for the call will be available via the Internet at http://www.harris.com/. The conference call also will be broadcast live via the Internet at http://www.harris.com/ . A replay also will be available at the same web site.

Microsoft Completes Acquisition of FrontBridge Technologies

Microsoft Corp. today announced it has completed the acquisition of FrontBridge Technologies Inc., a leading provider of managed services that help address corporate e-mail compliance, security and availability requirements.

Originally announced July 20, the acquisition of FrontBridge allows Microsoft to deliver services for enforcing compliance through archiving, ensuring e-mail availability in the case of a disaster, and improving protection of employee inboxes from viruses



and spam. FrontBridge, now a wholly owned subsidiary of Microsoft, will continue to offer managed messaging services for multiple e-mail platforms such as Microsoft(R) Exchange, IBM Lotus Domino and other SMTP-compliant servers currently supported by FrontBridge.

FRONTBRIDGE

"We are really excited about finalizing this acquisition so we can bring the FrontBridge team and their advanced services technology into Exchange," said Dave Thompson, corporate vice president of the Exchange Server Group at Microsoft. "This acquisition marks an important step forward in Microsoft's commitment to providing customers with greater flexibility and choice in how their messaging and collaboration solutions are delivered."

Dave Thompson

FrontBridge managed messaging services provide value to customers by requiring no upfront capital investment, minimizing IT management overhead, and enabling companies to concentrate their IT resources on areas that most directly impact their business, such as driving innovation, building organizational efficiencies, and increasing customer satisfaction.

RSM EquiCo

Customers such as RSM EquiCo, a global investment banking firm, are already realizing these benefits. "RSM EquiCo had the insight to recognize the strategic importance of e-mail archiving, not only for compliance requirements, but also as a business best practice," said John Dal Poggetto, vice president of RSM EquiCo. "By choosing FrontBridge, we didn't have to go through the hassle of acquiring new hardware or ramping up our in-house technical expertise."

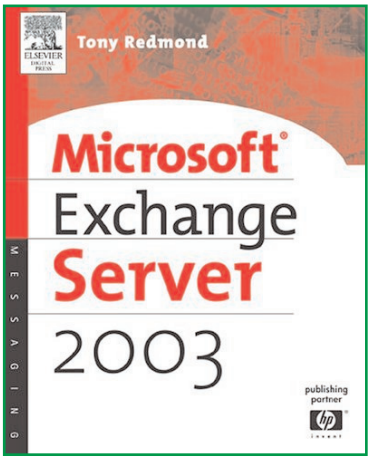
NEXTEL

FrontBridge partners are sharing the same enthusiasm for the acquisition. "Sprint Nextel has existing alliances with Microsoft and FrontBridge that will only be strengthened by their integration," said Randy Ritter, product marketing vice president of Sprint Nextel. "We are especially excited that Microsoft will continue to support the FrontBridge platform-agnostic strategy that enables us to grow and expand domestic and international opportunities for customers seeking best-of-breed message security, compliance and availability technologies."

Sprint

FrontBridge Services and Support

With the close of this acquisition, Microsoft begins the process of integrating FrontBridge into the Exchange Server Group, fully committed to delivering uninterrupted service for customers. Microsoft will continue to provide high-quality customer support for the complete range of FrontBridge managed services offered before the acquisition and will continue to work closely with FrontBridge partners.



More information about Exchange Server and this announcement can be found at (http://www.microsoft.com/exchange)

Next Generation of the Business Capital Search Engine Released at BusinessFinance.com

BusinessFinance.com's new business capital search engine allows businesses seeking financing ("Capital Seekers") to match their need to the lending criteria of more than 4,000 financial institutions ("Funding Sources") nationwide.

Foothill Ranch, CA – The business capital search engine at www.businessfinance.com lets Capital Seekers select from 43 different funding programs within six funding categories: working capital, commercial finance, venture capital or investment funds, equipment leasing and financing, commercial real estate finance and government small business loans. Capital Seekers can first learn about all the funding programs that are available to them before they search.

The technology that the business capital search engine employs is that of matching the Capital Seekers to Funding Sources based upon the financing criteria of each source. The criteria consists of the Funding Source's financing requirements for things such as: time in business, gross annual revenue, industry type, asset types and values, loan to value ratios, geographic location, business entity types, credit scores and more. Therefore the results that a Capital Seeker receives give them the best opportunity to actually receive funding rather than just get a list.

BusinessFinance.com also provides Capital Seekers with a wealth of "How-To" information. There are free workbooks that teach Capital Seekers how to prepare and present a business funding request, how to get their company ready to be approved for a business loan, what going after venture capital or seeking angel investors is all about, how to build their business credit rating and how to separate their business credit from their personal credit.

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Lack of Affordable Broadband Hindering Small Business

ISME, the *Independent* Business Organisation, has outlined that the small business sector is being sabotaged due to a lack of broadband, at a reasonable cost, in many parts of the Country. Consequently Irish business is being disadvantaged, in comparison to their international competitors, due to the absence of what should be a readily available and necessary business tool in the modern world. The Association blamed the Eircom stranglehold on broadband services as being at the root of the problem, where over 20% of SMEs have difficulty getting broadband.

Mark Fielding

According to ISME Chief Executive Mark Fielding, it is estimated that broadband access in Ireland is approximately 62% (taking into account line failures) in comparison to an average 88% in the EU. The UK and the North of Ireland have 100% broadband access.

"The Association has received numerous calls from members around the Country, outlining their frustrations at being unable to receive the service or having to wait several months for the installation of what turns out to be the most archaic of broadband services. This is completely unacceptable in a country that prides itself on being at the 'cutting edge' of new technologies", said Fielding.

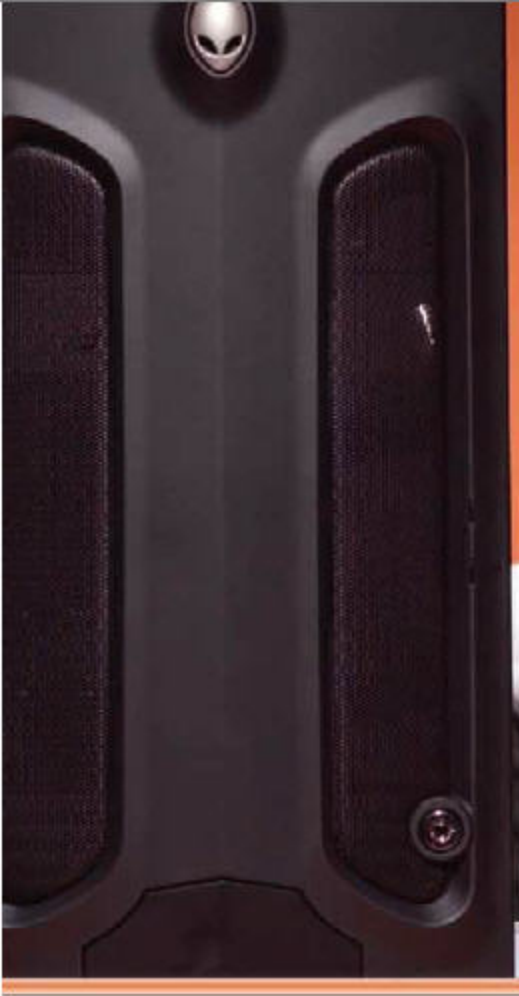
Businesses, lucky enough to have access to broadband, are paying through the teeth for the privilege of using a service that most other Europeans take for granted. According to Comreg, Ireland has the highest monthly line rental figure of 19 EU countries and the OECD has also outlined that Ireland comes 27th out of 30 for value for money.

It is quite obvious, that because of Eircom's dominant stranglehold position there is no incentive for them to improve the service. Other European countries are continuing to heavily innovate and invest in broadband infrastructure, while still offering superior packages at lower prices. As a consequence of the inadequate service provided, Ireland has one of the lowest business broadband take up rates at 30%. The regional breakdown paints a stark figure, with 52% of Dublin business having broadband, but falls to 29% in Munster, 26% in Leinster with a disastrous 20% in Connacht and Ulster.

According to a Forfas report Irish SMEs currently rank 18th of 21 countries, in terms of DSL take up, lagging behind countries such as Italy (70%), Spain (89%), and Denmark and Finland (100%).

"Irish SMEs' European competitors are not only enjoying a clear cost advantage, through cheaper faster broadband packages, but are increasing productivity through a fundamental business utility that many Irish SMEs are denied. Broadband is proven to bring significant competitive advantage and, while European enterprises are gaining new business, new customers, new markets and simultaneously cutting costs, Irish SMEs are still waiting to be connected," added Fielding.

In conclusion, Fielding called on the Government and Comreg to stop Eircom from delaying competition and allow other Telecom Service Providers access to the networks, ironically, initially funded by the taxpayer, to speed up broadband rollout. Only then, will Irish SMEs be able to begin the catch up process on their European competitors and enjoy the broadband productivity gains.



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Public Wi-Fi Hotspot Security Tips - Why Your Data Isn't Secure and What You Can Do About It

As more and more people acquire wireless notebooks and logon to the Internet at their favorite public Wi-Fi hotspot, hackers lie in wait, anxious to exploit the vast security vulnerabilities inherent in Wi-Fi. The following article discusses four tips that you can use to fortify your defenses while continuing to enjoy the benefits of public Wi-Fi.

Four Tips to Enhance Your Security at Public Wi-Fi Hotspots:

Tip #1

Beware the "Evil Twin". An "Evil Twin" is a hacker operated hotspot designed to trick users into believing it is a legitimate public hotspot by mimicking the legitimate public hotspot's network name and login page (if applicable). Once the user has connected to the "rogue" hotspot, the hacker may even go as far as mimicking login pages for popular email and banking sites thereby stealing the user's most valued login credentials.

A standard protection against this type of attack is to only use public hotspots that provide an SSL-encrypted login connection which has been certified as legitimate by a trusted third party such as Thawte or Verisign. If the login page's URL begins with "https" versus "http" and you see a "lock" icon in the lower right hand corner of your web browser, it is SSL-encrypted. You can view the SSL certificate from your web browser by clicking File > Properties > Certificates

Tip #2

Act as if someone is looking over your shoulder. Existing wireless security standards that use secret network keys (WEP, WPA) are useless at public hotspots as one user's network key can be used by a hacker to decrypt the entire network's traffic. As such, virtually all public hotspots disable WEP and WPA to provide a hassle free login for users. What this means is that your data is not encrypted as it travels through the air and can be read by a hacker using standard command line utilities found in certain operating systems. Unless your company provides you with a VPN (Virtual Private Network), your best bet is to act as if there is always someone looking over your shoulder because someone might be. If you intend to perform financial transactions, ensure that you are doing so over an SSL-encrypted connection.

Tip #3

Configure your wireless network settings as follows in order to prevent a hacker on the local network from obtaining direct access to your computer:

Turn your firewall on: Start > Settings > Network Connections > Wireless Network Connection > Change Advanced Settings > Advanced Tab > Windows Firewall Settings > Select "On" > OK

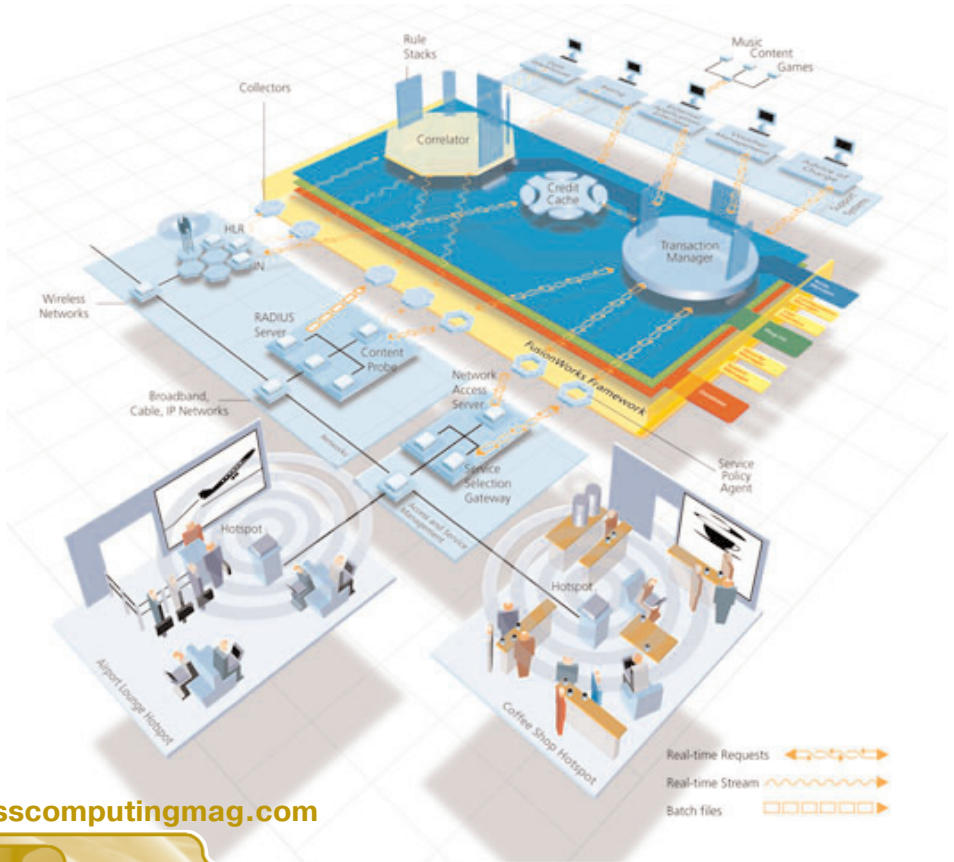
Turn ad-hoc mode off: Start > Settings > Network Connections > Wireless Network Connection > Change Advanced Settings > Wireless Networks Tab > Select Network > Properties > Uncheck "This is a computer-to-computer (ad-hoc) network" > OK

Disable file sharing: Start > Settings > Network Connections > Wireless Network Connection > Change Advanced Settings > Uncheck "File and Printer Sharing" > OK

Tip #4

Keep both your operating system and anti-virus software current with the latest updates. Operating system security vulnerabilities are being exposed almost as frequently as new viruses are being unleashed on the Internet. Fortunately, the major brands in both product categories offer an automatic update feature which makes receiving the required updates almost effortless.

By employing these four security tips, your data will stay out of the wrong hands while you continue to enjoy the benefits of public Wi-Fi.



Computer Hard Drives Have a 100-Percent Failure Rate

Computer users trust too much that a new hard drive will give them years of trouble-free service. Lulled into a sense of security and ignoring the good advice to backup their data, they find themselves with a computer that has stopped functioning and in need of professional data recovery services.

The data recovery service technicians at http://DataICU.com hear the story each and every day from computer users who find themselves unable to access their critical data. The scenarios are all a little different, but the lament is the same: "The computer isn't even a year old," they complain, "I didn't think I had to worry about a hard drive failure."

Hard drives have a 100-percent failure rate. The only thing not known is the timing of the failure. While it is reasonable to expect a few years of reliable service from a hard drive, failure of drives can occur within the first few weeks or months of their use from simple manufacturing faults. These types of failures represent a very small percentage of total hard drive failures, but they are just as devastating to the users as are the failures of older hard drives. Additionally, all drives are at risk due to electrical surges, regardless of age.

The only sure way to prevent data loss is by backing up the data on a schedule that meets the user's data retention needs. For some users this means creating a simple copy of the data to an external data storage device on a weekly or monthly basis. For others it may mean an elaborate system of data redundancy across a network on a daily or hourly basis, synchronizing to a server that performs yet another backup to an external device such as a tape data backup system. Some will find that using an on-line service company to backup their data over the Internet will be the right solution.

Data recovery companies like http://DataICU.com will be happy to assist you when you have a data emergency, but cannot guarantee that your particular data loss can be recovered. Hard drives that have suffered true head crashes and the resulting media damage may not be recoverable at all. A good backup of your data is the only real data loss prevention method available.

The Data Recovery Services of Internet Desk, Inc.

Deluxe Menu has been released!

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Deluxe Menu

Deluxe Menu is a versatile, ready-made solution that allows professional and amateur web developers to create superior navigation systems for their web sites and web applications. The menu supports cross-frame mode, 60+ great visual effects, floating, drag-n-drop, flat, 3d and XP styles, relative and absolute positions, vertical and horizontal directions, animated icons and arrows, unlimited submenus, separators and more. Create a cross-browser, search engine friendly, fast-loading web interface of any desired complexity and appearance. You don't need any in-depth knowledge of HTML or Javascript to develop web menus with Deluxe Menu. By simply changing a menu parameter file, you can create any navigation system in minutes. Deluxe Menu comes with an easy-to-use GUI wizard that allows you to generate and test the menu in just a few mouse clicks.

A picture is worth a thousand bucks. (or maybe more...)

If you own a digital camera, you're no stranger to the "card full" message. Depending on your camera settings and the size of your flash card, you might be able to fit only a handful of photos onto one card. Don't miss out on that once-in-a-lifetime image—stock up on reliable Crucial flash cards, backed by a limited lifetime warranty and out-of-this-world support!

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webMethods Debuts Comprehensive Solution for Optimizing Payments Processing at SIBOS 2005

webMethods Inc., a leading business integration and optimization software company, today debuted webMethods Payments Monitoring(TM), a new solution designed to help wholesale banks and other financial institutions transform their corporate payments operations into more predictable, customer-centric and profitable business units. By enabling the automatic monitoring of the entire payments process in real-time, webMethods Payments Monitoring delivers immediate enhancements in a financial institution's ability to meet customer service level commitments while helping them achieve continuous process improvements. The announcement was made in conjunction with webMethods' significant presence at SIBOS 2005, the world's premier financial services event, where the company is showcasing a variety of industry-leading capabilities that currently enable more than 135 financial institutions to meet some of their most business-critical challenges.

webMethods. Get There Faster.

Confronted with increasing global competition for corporate payments customers, webMethods Payments Monitoring helps wholesale banks address their simultaneous need to reduce operating costs through automation, consistently deliver on their customer promises, and develop greater differentiation in their products and services. As Susan Feinberg of TowerGroup, a leading financial services analyst firm, defines the situation, "Corporate and institutional customers expect banks to execute their payments flawlessly. That has become the minimum requirement in order to stay in the game. With the growing demand from customers for real-time visibility into the payments process, banks must implement solutions that ensure that transactions and the associated payment information are handled in an efficient, accurate and timely manner throughout the entire processing cycle."

webMethods Payments Monitoring fulfills these requirements by providing wholesale banks with the comprehensive ability to reduce transaction costs, provide best-in-class customer service and deliver new customer-specific services. A key differentiator is the enhanced visibility and predictability that helps banks avoid financial penalties by continuously measur-

ing adherence to important customer-specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The predictive analytics built into the solution can even be used to proactively alert users to potential issues through the use of patent-pending "fingerprinting" technology that dynamically compares current service-level trends with previously incurred violations. This enhanced, real-time process monitoring can also be used deliver additional customer benefits, such as the ability for end-users to immediately determine payment status, which provides corporate customers with greater control over the execution of these transactions while allowing banks the opportunity to assess additional fees as a result.

"By taking advantage of the proven technology of our flagship product suite, webMethods Fabric(TM), we're now able to offer the industry's most comprehensive solution for monitoring and optimizing payments processing," said Deborah Rosen, executive vice president, Worldwide Marketing, webMethods Inc. "Already, one of our banking customers is using webMethods to manage annual payment volume of nearly US$3 trillion with greater precision, efficiency and control than previously possible. Operations of this scope underscore the need for automatic monitoring and a mechanism to enable process improvement. The real-time visibility and feedback offered by webMethods Payments Monitoring more than meets these requirements as it provides wholesale banks with the integrated ability to fully optimize and differentiate their business."

Deborah Rosen

Built on the service-oriented architecture (SOA) enabled by webMethods Fabric, webMethods Payments Monitoring is a comprehensive solution that leverages and extends existing payments infrastructure to deliver increased agility and adaptability. More specifically, the new solution brings together process integration, automation and monitoring within a unified solution suite so that wholesale banks can take advantage of a closed-loop approach for more readily achieving continuous process improvements across their most critical operations. The solution also features full support for Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT) and Automated Clearing House (ACH) transactions to further simplify the task of managing, automating and streamlining real-time payments processes that span a variety of disparate systems.

As a complete solution suite, webMethods Payments Monitoring offers all of the most essential features needed by banks looking to secure optimal performance from their payments businesses:

- Process Design and Modeling - Provide users with the ability to eliminate fragmented and redundant steps within the end-to-end payments process by visually mapping, modeling and testing the real-time interaction of systems and users.

- Straight-Through Processing - Increase operational efficiency while eliminating errors through the extended use of process automation and robust, SOA-based system integration to further streamline operations.

- Real-time and Predictive Monitoring - Improve achievement of customer service commitments with real-time, predictive monitoring that allows institutions to proactively address and resolve service-level issues.

- Executive Dashboard - More effectively manage the entire payments processing life-cycle via real-time access to key performance indicators.

- Integrated Compliance Management - Support achievement of compliance requirements with predefined exception management processes incorporating human workflows, documented audit trails and automated alerts to suspicious activities.

- Customer Self-Service - Promote customer loyalty through the introduction of web-based, self-service tools that empower users to more directly manage and monitor their payments processes.

Pricing and Availability

webMethods Payments Monitoring is available immediately with pricing available directly from webMethods. Further information can be found by visiting www.webmethods.com/payments.

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Global Payments' Subsidiary, MUZO, Opens Office in Moscow

Global Payments Inc., a world leader in electronic payment processing, today announced that MUZO, a.s., Global Payments' Prague-based, majority-owned subsidiary, recently opened a new office in Moscow to increase and expand Global Payments' activities in the developing Russian financial market.

By opening an office in Moscow, Global Payments will be able to offer and provide a full range of processing services more effectively to Russian and other international financial institutions. Global Payments currently provides credit card issuing services to one of the largest providers of consumer credit in the Russian Federation, Home Credit and Finance Bank.

Stanislav Coufal will head up the new Russian operations. Coufal joined MUZO in 2004 as an Area Manager for Russia and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Coufal is familiar with the Russian financial environment, having served for three years as a Vice-Chairman of the Board of the Czech-Russian Bank in Moscow.

According to Coufal, "The growth potential of the Russian financial market is substantial, and I am excited that we are part of that opportunity. Establishing a physical presence in the Russian market is an absolute necessity for the expansion of our client portfolio and will provide us with a significant competitive advantage."

CEO and Chairman for MUZO, Petr Sedlacek, said, "We are very optimistic regarding our entry into the promising Russian market, where we can leverage our experience and expertise. Russia may become a significant market for MUZO."

Based in Prague, MUZO serves financial institutions with a comprehensive package of payment services including credit and debit card transaction processing, installation and servicing of ATM and POS terminals, as well as card issuing services such as card database management and card personalization. MUZO's proprietary platform is among the first in the European market to be compliant with the international EMV standards for chip- based payment cards.

The Fast Charge Payment Gateway™ Offers Enhanced Free Recurring Billing Services

The Fast Charge Payment Gateway™ – a credit card processing service and merchant account gateway includes a free recurring billing option for online checks and credit cards with each merchant account set up. Membership dues and subscription fees are examples of products and services that are typically billed on a recurring basis. Recurring billing can also be used to offer installment billing plans for products (i.e. three payments of $19.95) Fast Charge offers a robust yet easy to use recurring billing system that can be configured to suit the needs of your business.

Recurring Billing features:

Multiple billing profiles: Merchants can configure different profiles for products and allow the consumer to select the one that fits their need. For example, your consumers can select to be billed monthly at one rate, or pick an annual fee at a different rate.

Flexible billing cycles: Recurring billing can be configured to bill weekly, monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, annually, etc.

Different initial and recurring amounts: Different dollar amounts can be specified for the first billing and subsequent billings. For example, a separate "Signup Fee" and "Monthly Fee" and be configured. Special introductory rates can be set up, or free trial periods offered.

Configurable billing terms: The duration of billing terms can be configured from one time to unlimited. You can bill daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually.

Automatic rebilling: Transactions can be automatically retried if not successful. You set the retry interval and frequency – we'll take care of the rest.

Detailed reporting: Detailed transaction history of your consumers' recurring payments are available online for your review. Also, daily summary reports keep you up to date on recurring activity: how many new subscribers, cancelled subscribers, how many were billed that day, whether a billing was successful or not.

The Fast Charge Payment Gateway™ is a scalable and easily customizable payment processing solution and is recommended for merchants who require peak performance and direct control over payment functionality on their computer or Website.

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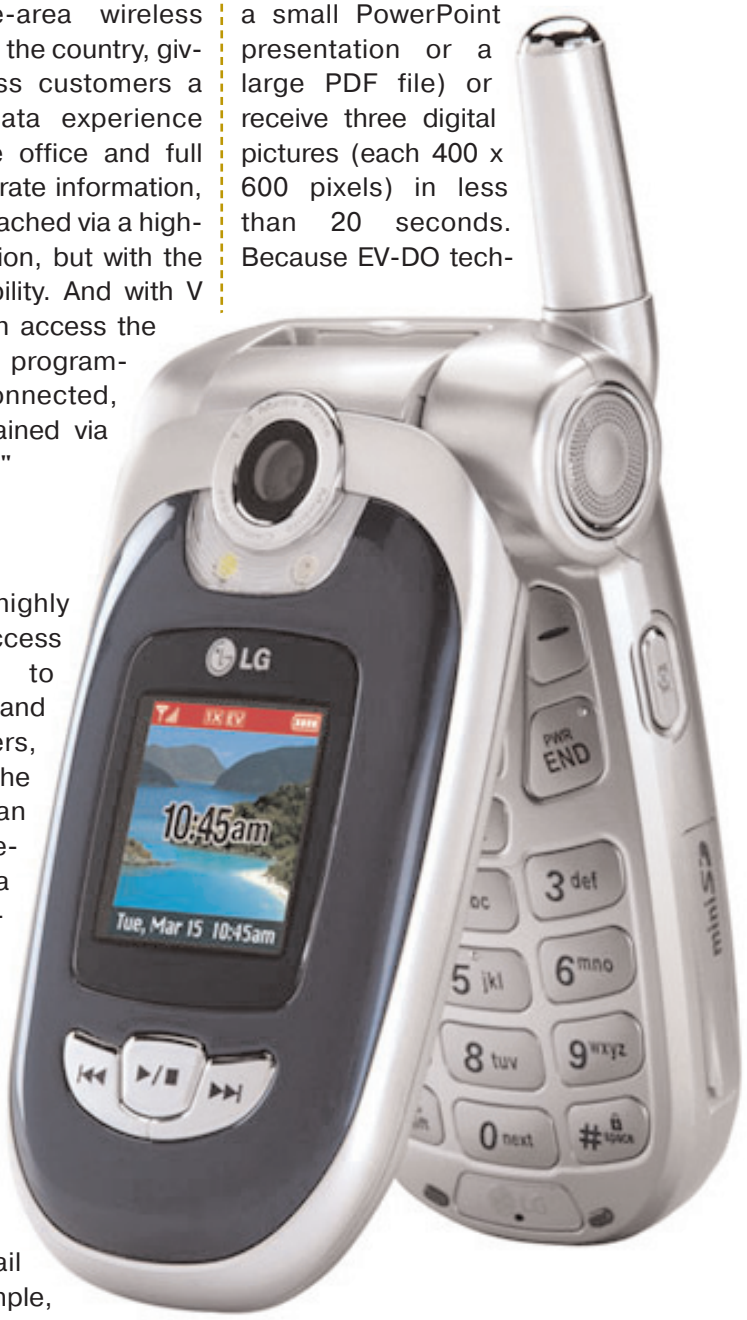
Wireless Broadband Arrives in North Carolina: Raleigh/Durham Region to Receive Verizon Wireless' BroadbandAccess Wireless Internet Service and V Cast Consumer Multimedia Service

Building on its successful strategy to provide customers superior wireless services in the United States, Verizon Wireless Region President Jerry Fountain today announced the launch of two award-winning services in the Raleigh/Durham metropolitan area, one developed primarily for business customers, the other for the consumer market. BroadbandAccess – the only national wide-area wireless broadband Internet access service available in the United States – and V CAST, the nation's first and only wireless broadband multimedia service for consumers, are both available today in Raleigh/Durham region. Both services run on the company's high-speed EV-DO (Evolution Data-Optimized) wireless broadband network, the nation's largest and fastest wireless broadband network.

Jerry Fountain, Carolinas/Tennessee regional president for Verizon Wireless, said: "BroadbandAccess provides mobile workers in Raleigh, Durham and Cary areas with access to the best in wireless networks, which takes mobility to a whole new level. Verizon Wireless' EV-DO network is the only national wide-area wireless broadband network in the country, giving BroadbandAccess customers a superior wireless data experience while away from the office and full access to their corporate information, just as if they were attached via a high-speed wired connection, but with the freedom of true mobility. And with V CAST, consumers can access the latest in multimedia programming to stay connected, informed and entertained via their wireless phones."

BroadbandAccess

The company's highly touted BroadbandAccess service, available to mobile professionals and enterprise customers, allows customers in the Raleigh metropolitan area to connect wirelessly to Internet via their laptop at broadband speeds, a convenient way to conduct business. The nation's largest and fastest wireless broadband service, BroadbandAccess allows customers to download a 1 Megabyte email attachment (for example, a small PowerPoint presentation or a large PDF file) or receive three digital pictures (each 400 x 600 pixels) in less than 20 seconds. Because EV-DO tech-



nology is backward compatible – a distinct advantage to the company's CDMA technology – customers who travel outside a BroadbandAccess coverage area with an EV-DO device will seamlessly switch to Verizon Wireless' existing NationalAccess service, which runs on the company's 1xRTT network.

Working with virtual private network (VPN) connections, business customers can use BroadbandAccess as an extension of their corporate local area network (LAN) or intranet, allowing them to work from any location within the BroadbandAccess coverage area, as if they were in the office. BroadbandAccess, with typical user download speeds of 400-700 kilobits per second (kbps), is ideal for downloading files and business-critical information residing behind corporate firewalls and for accessing e-mail, intranets and the Internet. BroadbandAccess' EV-DO technology has its own data protection and authentication and is designed to work with a business' existing IT infrastructure and security solutions.

In conjunction with today's launch of BroadbandAccess in Raleigh/Durham, Verizon Wireless also announced new pricing for its BroadbandAccess service - current and new customers with any voice plan can now get unlimited BroadbandAccess for $59.99 monthly access with a two-year customer agreement. For non-voice customers, BroadbandAccess is available for $79.99 monthly access for unlimited use with a one- or two-year customer agreement. The new pricing for voice customers on BroadbandAccess is available through December 31, 2005. For more information on BroadbandAccess from Verizon Wireless, visit www.verizonwireless.com/broadbandaccess.

V CAST

Verizon Wireless' V CAST service enables consumers to access short video content on-demand, viewing current news, weather, sports and entertainment programming. With V CAST, customers can also download and play cutting-edge 3D games, watch music videos and concert performances from favorite artists, view short programs specifically designed for mobile phones and other video content right on their phones. For a list of all videos and 3D game entertainment available on V CAST, visit www.getvcast.com.

CAST™

"With V CAST, consumers can access the latest in multimedia programming to stay connected, informed and entertained via their wireless phones," added Fountain. "This ground-breaking technology provides clear video images of the most interesting content available - all on your wireless phone."

For $15.00 monthly access added to their Verizon Wireless calling plan, customers in the Raleigh/Durham area can get the V CAST Vpak, which includes unlimited access to a wide array of more than 300 daily updated video clips from leading news, sports, weather and entertainment content providers. Unlimited basic short content is included, but application download fees apply for 3D games, premium video short content, and all other Get It Now(R) applications. There are no airtime charges to download, stream or watch V

CAST content. Customers can also download, stream or watch premium short video content, available at additional cost, which includes video such as music videos, select sports clips and mobisodes. Verizon Wireless V CAST customers also receive monthly access and unlimited browsing on Verizon Wireless' Mobile Web 2.0(SM) news and information service. For a limited time, customers who sign up for V CAST receive one month of service free.

EV-DO Network

BroadbandAccess and V CAST run on Verizon Wireless' EV-DO network, which began commercial operation in October 2003 in San Diego and Washington, D.C. and is now the only national wide-area wireless broadband network in the country. Verizon Wireless' EV-DO network initially made its commercial debut with BroadbandAccess wireless Internet access service for business customers and mobile professionals. The company launched its V CAST wireless broadband multimedia service in February 2005.

Verizon Wireless has expanded the EV-DO coverage area - the V CAST and BroadbandAccess service areas - several times already this year, and the network now covers 60 major metropolitan areas and 64 airports across the country. The company's expansion strategy includes adding new markets and expanding network coverage in existing markets.

In the greater Raleigh/Durham area, Verizon Wireless' EV-DO coverage area includes Durham, Orange and Wake Counties.

Verizon Wireless has invested more than $4 billion annually on the build-out and enhancement of its networks since the company's inception in 2000, and last year alone it invested $5 billion, including build-out of the wireless broadband EV-DO network. Over the past five years, Verizon Wireless has invested $385 million to enhance, expand and strengthen North Carolina's wireless network. In 2005 alone, Verizon Wireless investment in NC is expected to reach at least $175 million.

V CAST and BroadbandAccess Accolades

In May 2005, CMP Media LLC's Network Computing named Verizon Wireless as the Best Business Data Service for BroadbandAccess in the publication's 2005 Well-Connected Awards, beating out business data services of two other major wireless carriers.

LAPTOP magazine awarded Verizon Wireless' BroadbandAccess service with the Editor's Choice Award in its December 2004 issue. According to the article titled, "Be Your Own Hot Spot," BroadbandAccess is the only wide-area broadband service "that lives up to the hype." Reviewers concluded, "In short, Verizon Wireless' BroadbandAccess service lives up to its name. If you live or work in one of the current coverage areas, you'll be rewarded with a high- speed connection that's perfect for those of us with little patience. Which is just about every mobile worker we know."

The company's V CAST consumer multimedia service has received recognition as well. Within weeks of the initial launch, Verizon Wireless' V CAST service won best "Mobile/Remote Service" at the fifth annual MobileFocus Awards, which were presented at CTIA in New Orleans and sponsored by Pepcom and LAPTOP magazine. The awards honor the best in mobile and wireless technology.

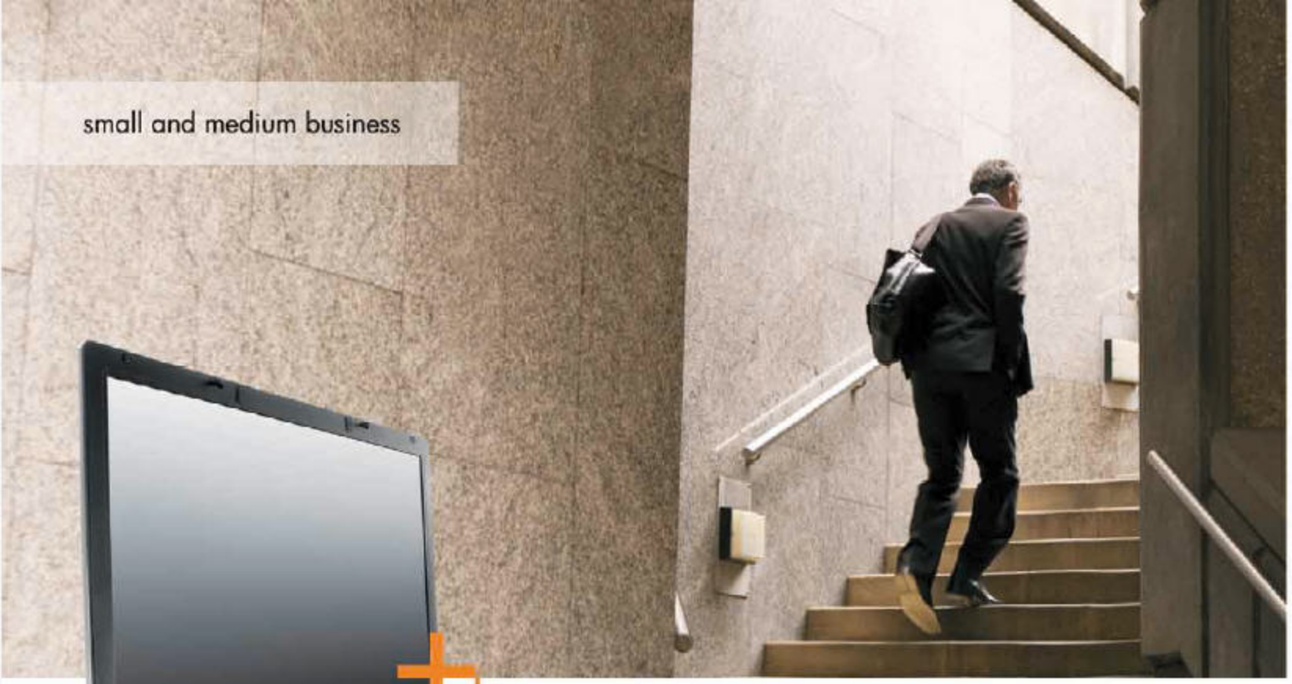
BroadbandAccess PC Cards and V CAST Phones

Verizon Wireless offers several PC Cards for BroadbandAccess customers, including the UTStarcom Personal Communications PC 5740, Kyocera KPC-650 and Novatel V620 cards.

Customers can access V CAST on three hot new phones. The featured phone is the new LG VX8100 phone - with its full-motion short content with audio streaming and downloading and playback capabilities, the LG VX8100 offers customers a rich and rewarding interactive experience. The LG VX8100 is available for $99.99 after a $50 mail-in rebate with a two-year customer agreement. V CAST customers can also check out the latest in news, entertainment and sports on the Motorola E815, which is $149.99 after a $50 mail-in rebate with a two-year customer agreement, the Samsung a890, available for $169.99 after a $50 mail-in rebate with a two-year customer agreement and the CDM8940 from UTStarcom Personal Communications (formerly Audiovox Communications Corp.) for $99.99 after a $50 mail-in rebate with a two-year customer agreement.

For more information on V CAST or BroadbandAccess from Verizon Wireless, visit a Verizon Wireless Communications Store, call 1-800-2 JOIN IN or go to www.verizonwireless.com. Business customers can contact a Verizon Wireless Business Sales Representative directly at 1-800-VZW-4-BIZ.

small and medium business



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- Three-year on-site limited warranty[13]

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Peer 1 Network Announces Acquisition of Interland's Dedicated Server Assets

Peer 1 Network Enterprises, Inc., a provider of high performance Internet infrastructure, announced today that it has purchased the dedicated server assets of Interland, Inc., a leading provider of Web sites and online services for small and medium-sized businesses for a purchase price of US$14 million. The assets acquired include data centers in Atlanta, Georgia; Fremont, California; and Miami, Florida, totaling over 115,000 square feet and approximately 8,300 dedicated servers.

C. Geoffrey Hampson, president and chief executive officer of Peer 1, anticipates that all of Peer 1's business units will benefit significantly from the acquisition. "The accretive acquisition of Interland's dedicated server assets is a key strategic element in the evolution of Peer 1 Network," he said. "This transaction adds a large customer base, skilled staff, solid dedicated server equipment and three data centers to Peer 1 Network's existing infrastructure. Add that to Peer 1's specialization in customer service and high performance network, and the innovation of our subsidiary ServerBeach Ltd, and you have an outstanding fit."

According to Tier 1 Research's February, 2005 "Internet Infrastructure Services" report, colocation revenues rose 6% year over year in the fourth quarter of 2004, and dedicated standardized hosting experienced an average of 25% increase in revenues over the same time period. "Peer 1 Network has been aggressively pursuing acquisition opportunities for over a year," continued Hampson. "With such compelling growth numbers in an industry for which we already have significant high performance infrastructure in place, it is clear to see the strategic addition of Interland's dedicated server assets."

In connection with the acquisition, the Company has completed three financing transactions. Firstly, the Company has entered into an agreement with a lender who has provided a senior long term facility of up to US$28 million, of which US$24 million was drawn down upon completion of the acquisition. The proceeds of the loan were used to fund the acquisition and to repay indebtedness of the Company. The loan bears interest at a rate per annum equal to Libor plus 6.5%. The maturity date of the loan is September 2, 2008; however, the Company may extend the maturity date for two years. A portion of the net proceeds received by the Company or any of its subsidiaries on the sale of assets or the issuance of equity securities are to be used to repay the loan. The Company issued to the two lenders warrants to acquire an aggregate of 2,306,571 common shares of the Company at the price per share of US$0.23 for a period of 5 years.

Second, the Company's subsidiary, Peer 1 Network (USA) Inc. ("Peer 1 USA") has issued 7000 shares of Series A Preferred stock at a price per share of US$1,000, for aggregate proceeds of US$7,000,000. Celerity Partners, of Menlo Park, California, acquired $4 Million and insiders of the Company acquired an additional US$2,620,000 of the Series A Preferred stock. The Series A Preferred stock is non-voting, carries a cumulative annual dividend of 8% and is redeemable by the holders after the 4th anniversary of the date of issuance. At any time after the 4th anniversary of the date of issuance, subject to certain conditions, the holders of the Series A Preferred stock may require the Company to purchase some or all of such holder's shares of Series A Preferred stock for cash and the Company may require the holders to sell all of their shares of Series A Preferred stock to the Company for cash. In each case, the purchase price per share is US$2,000. In addition, a holder of Series A Preferred stock may require the Company to purchase any or all of such holder's shares in exchange for the number of common shares of the Company equal to (i) US$1,000 per share of Series A Preferred stock, plus cumulative but unpaid dividends thereon until the 4th anniversary of the date of issuance of such stock, (ii) divided by US$0.2291.

Third, the Company has converted approximately CDN$7,023,000 of its aggregate indebtedness into approximately 25,309,000 common shares of the Company, at a price per share of CDN$$0.2775. This indebtedness was held by insiders of the Company.

PEER 1 NETWORK

StartLogic Reaches New Milestone of 40,000 Web sites Hosted

StartLogic, Inc., a leading web hosting provider, announces it has reached the milestone of currently hosting 40,000 active Web sites. Since opening its doors less than two years ago, StartLogic has experienced a rapid increase in customer growth. The company has already doubled its customer base this year and was a Top 10 Web Host Award Winner in the "Fastest Growing Company" category by HostReview in July 2005.

This growth can be attributed in part to the company's focus on customer satisfaction, says John Raygoza, General Manager of StartLogic. "Simply stated, we have good people at StartLogic who care about our customers," notes Raygoza. "Our highly skilled staff members are able to give our customers the answers they are looking for in a timely manner without getting the runaround."

This customer-centric approach also enables StartLogic to receive awards such as "Best UNIX Web Host" by Web Host Directory in June 2005 and acquire a large amount of customers as transfer accounts from other hosting providers. "We talk to hundreds of very unhappy people every day who are frustrated with their current provider," says Thomas Jaspers, Technical Support Supervisor for StartLogic. "We know that all these people need is someone to be there for them. At StartLogic, we view our customers as a part of our business family."

GoDaddy.com(R) Now #1 Shared Hosting Provider

GoDaddy.com(R), the No. 1 registrar of domain names worldwide, today announced it is now the largest shared hosting provider in North America, according to Netcraft(R) Ltd. (www.netcraft.com), a globally respected authority since 1995 on the market share of web servers, operating systems, hosting providers, ISPs, encrypted transactions, electronic commerce, scripting languages and content technologies on the Internet.

"Go Daddy(R) has grown very quickly, against some fierce competition and now hosts the largest number of active sites of any hosting company in the United States," said Mike Prettejohn, Director of Netcraft.

Since entering the hosting market in late 2000, Go Daddy(R) has continuously augmented its hosting offering, with ever-increasing bandwidth and disk space, additional features and lower prices. Most recently, Go Daddy(R) expanded its hosting offerings even further, by entering the dedicated and virtual dedicated hosting markets.

"It's exciting to know that the customers who made us No. 1 in domains have stayed with us for their hosting needs," said Bob Parsons, president and founder of Go Daddy(R). "Our shared hosting plans have grown in popularity throughout the years, and continue to grow, because they are affordable, feature-rich solutions backed by world-class support that serve the needs of individuals and businesses," Parsons added.

Geoffrey Hampson

All Go Daddy hosting packages are supported by world-class data centers which include multiple OC-48, OC-12 and OC-3 connections, a fast gigabit Ethernet backbone, and multiple diverse upstream providers totaling 4 Gbps of Tier-1 Internet bandwidth. Additionally, all hosting plans are supported by best-of-breed router, firewall and server equipment, full network redundancy, enterprise-class backup and restore technology (daily incremental and weekly full backups), 24 x7 monitoring and security, and much more. For more information, visit www.godaddy.com/gdshop/hosting/landing.asp.

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Rusbiz.com Launches Unique Online Services To Promote B2B E-Commerce

The program is planned to be introduced in three stages. This will allow members of the portal to get accustomed to key features of e-business solutions gradually and educate them how to integrate these features seamlessly in their existing business practice.

The first step of this program renders new services such as automatic posting of trade leads and sales offers in e-Marketplace daily, and transformation of an e-Marketplace offer into a trade lead posting without manual involvement

Rusbiz.com is a B2B portal well known for providing extensive e-business features as free services to registered members, which include trade leads, internal messaging system, online supply chain solution, storefront, use of Rusbiz marketplace and e-catalog.

RUSBIZ.COM
Global B2B Exchange

Starting from today, Rusbiz will automate the process of trade lead posting and marketplace sales offer posting, which, once entered by user, will appear on daily basis for certain period of time. Full details of the offered services can be viewed at http://www.rusbiz.com/features2.html. These services will be provided free of charge to selected Rusbiz members.

"We are pleased to present this important program to member companies to help them get accustomed and feel comfortable with use of such features of B2B portal as e-marketplace, and, also to save time and effort while conducting routine trading activities such as daily trade lead posting," said CEO of Rusbiz Dr. Nowshade Kabir. "A vast amount of international trade companies are still using only limited options of e-business features, trade leads posting in various B2B exchanges in many cases being the only function despite the development of other B2B e-business solutions and growing capabilities of B2B portals."

Rusbiz is planning to introduce more complex features gradually with adequate amount of educational material and hands-on training information. This will include B2B solutions like e-procurement, deal management, shipment tracking system, web store -integrated e-commerce system for exporters and importers, practical use of electronic catalog of goods and services, etc.

Alcatel awarded a 19 million Euro contract to bring broadband to less populous areas of Asturias in Spain

Alcatel has been selected by the Principality of Asturias, Spain, to deploy a Fiber to the User - FTTU - network in the mining valley of Asturias. The network will provide thousands of residents of regions near the Caudal, Nal?n and Narcea river basins, access to high speed Internet and bandwidth-intensive applications.

ALCATEL

Alcatel is the turnkey provider of this 19 million euro project, with full responsibility for the network design and planning, as well as for its deployment, service roll out and maintenance, for the Asturias' local authority.

Alcatel will also supply its 7450 Ethernet Service Switch - ESS - to ensure interconnection between the multiple networks, and to provide the various network operators within this northern Spanish region with the flexibility required to differentiate service types. The Alcatel 7450 ESS will also provide cost-effective broadband aggregation which will help optimize capacity in the FTTH network.

The Alcatel solution will allow users to access a wide range of voice, IP television - IPTV - and Internet services, at speeds of up to 10 Mbps, with the flexibility to expand in the future.

"With today's advanced networks, it is now possible to introduce a compelling array of services that in the past were not possible, given bandwidth and access constraints. With the deployment by Alcatel of this broadband network, we can satisfy one of our government's prime objectives : to offer the most advanced communications services regardless of whether the citizens are located in remote or densely-populated centers," stated Luis Iturrioz, Vice Minister of Budget and Public Administration for the Principality of Asturias. "This is a great step forward."

"Alcatel's solution together with our expertise in the management of turnkey projects will make it possible to reduce the digital divide in the mining areas, guaranteeing access to high value added user-centric services to most population centers of above 1,000 inhabitants," added Frederic Rose, President of Alcatel's integration and services activities."

Telabria Launches WiMAX-Class Broadband Service for Data + Voice

Telabria, the award-winning UK regional network operator, has launched its wide area wireless broadband network after six months of intensive trials in Kent, South East England. Targeted at both residential and business markets, the Skylink service offers customers symmetric broadband speeds up to 10Mbps, as well as voice-over-IP (VoIP) telephone service. Skylink is the first network of its kind in the UK to offer combined data and voice over a WiMAX-class network to homes and businesses. The Skylink backbone of high-capacity fiber and licensed band microwave links encompasses over 1,300 square kilometers (850 square miles) making it one of the largest next-generation wireless broadband networks in Europe, and brings a whole new class of broadband services to Kent's population of 675,000 households and 60,000 businesses. The initial roll out of Skylink includes the city of Canterbury and borough of Swale, with additional urban, suburban and rural areas planned as part of Telabria's ongoing Skylink network expansion throughout 2005 and 2006.

"In the UK symmetric broadband services are scarce outside metropolitan areas," said Jim Baker, Telabria's CEO and founder. "In Kent, less than 16% of the telephone exchanges support symmetric DSL (SDSL) which means customers will be highly challenged to take advantage of emerging technologies such as VoIP and video conferencing which demand fast upload capability." Copper network based SDSL is range limited, with 2Mbps services restricted to within just 1.6km (0.9 miles) of an exchange. WiMAX - the emerging standard for wireless networking - does not suffer from these limitations and Skylink delivers a range of broadband packages from 1.5Mbps to over 10Mbps at distances up to 20km (12.5 miles) from the base station. "Skylink's ability to reach far beyond copper, combined with highly competitive pricing and the merger of data and voice into one service, sets a new standard for broadband connectivity."

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Skylink subscribers benefit from speeds unavailable over xDSL in most of the UK, and unlike many ADSL subscriptions usage is not subject to monthly limits. Skylink Pro, a 20:1 symmetric service, sets a new standard in symmetric broadband pricing at just ?49.99 for a 1.5Mbps service and ?79.99 for a 3Mbps service, which is up to 75% cheaper than equivalent SDSL services over copper networks. Skylink Ultra, Telabria's premium 10:1 business-class package, offers 5Mbps for ?249 and 10Mbps for ?369, both backed by a service level agreement and response time commitment not usually found in SDSL services. The maximum speed of SDSL from British Telecom, the UK's incumbent operator, is just 2Mbps. Telabria also offers a residential asymmetric service, Skylink Home, which is available at speeds of 1.5Mbps (?24.99/month) or 3Mbps (?34.99/month), with an upload speed of 512Kbps which is double the 256Kbps UK ADSL limit.

All Skylink packages are available with a telephone service that works over the subscriber's broadband connection and which does not require a traditional landline to operate. Skylink Voice Home offers residential customers unlimited local and national calls for ?9.99 per month, while Skylink Voice Business is available to SOHO and SME customers for ?19.99. Skylink Voice PBX delivers ten lines for ?99.99 per month with full virtual switchboard functionality including auto-attendant, voicemail-to-email, fax-to-email, and physical extensions that can work anywhere in the world with a broadband connection. "We really wanted to offer our customers a complete alternative to services delivered over old-fashioned copper

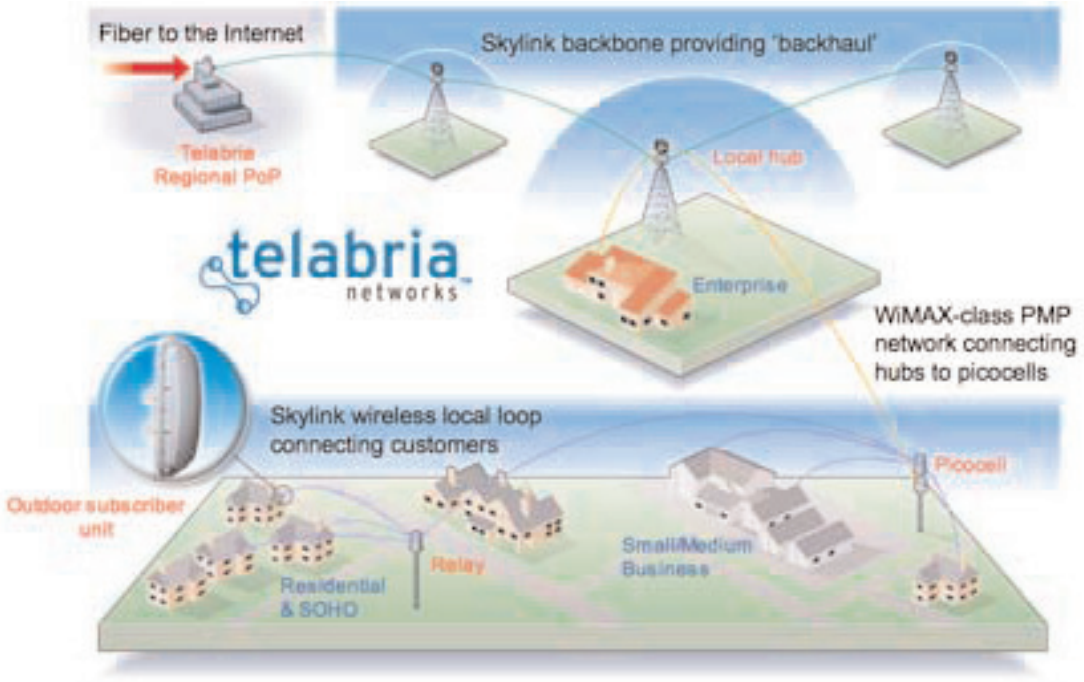
networks," said Baker. " With Skylink not only is Telabria offering unified broadband and voice on a single bill, but at speeds that outclass the competition and at prices that will save our customers a great deal of money over landline equivalents."

Subscribers will connect to the Skylink network via a small outdoor radio, typically mounted at roof height, which connects to the nearest Skylink base station; service is then delivered to a standard Ethernet jack located in the customer's premises. Telabria utilizes the 5.8GHz spectrum to deliver 'last-mile' WiMAX-class connections, a band which is lightly licensed by the UK regulator Ofcom for fixed broadband wireless operations.

Telabria expects Skylink to be highly attractive to home and business users who are on the fringes of xDSL reach. Telephone exchanges tend to be in located in the center of communities, while the majority of new residential and business property development is taking place at sites on the outskirts, thus furthest away from the exchange and least likely to get true broadband speeds over 1Mbps. In rapidly expanding areas such as the South East of England, where the UK Government has committed to build in excess of 640,000 new homes over the next twenty years, broadband access is seen as a key component of a regeneration initiative to improve the local economy and create sustainable communities. "Telabria's Skylink service is an excellent example of ways in which 21st century technology can support local and regional regeneration framework," said Councillor Andrew Bowles, Leader of Swale Borough Council, and chairman of Swale Forward - a partnership of local and national government agencies dedicated to regeneration and economic growth in Swale, part of the Thames Gateway. "In order to attract knowledge driven businesses and stimulate the type of economic growth upon which we wish to focus, services must exist that are comparable to those available in metropolitan markets. With Skylink being launched in Swale today, making it one of the first areas in the UK with this advanced broadband service, the Borough is clearly at an advantage and we're delighted to be setting the pace for the rest of the county to follow". The borough of Swale, centered around the town of Sittingbourne, contains over 50,000 households and 4,500 businesses. It is also home to Kent Science Park, where Telabria's headquarters and network operations center are based, and where a hub of research and hi-technology business has developed.

In addition to its Skylink broadband network, Telabria has established a portfolio of over 75 public hotspot Wi-Fi Zones throughout the South East, including fourteen in Central London. Subscribers to Skylink will have free unlimited use of the hotspot network when away from home or the office, enabling them to check email, surf the web or place VoIP calls when out and about. Telabria is also working with public transportation companies to add Wi-Fi hotspots to coaches and buses popular with daily commuters.

Privately-held Telabria recently secured a round of funding in excess of ?1m from individual and institutional investors that includes Faroese Telecom, the national carrier in the Faroe Islands, with further rounds planned for the future. Telabria expects rapid growth of its WiMAX-class network throughout Kent, and plans to expand into other regions during 2006. A web site with full details of the new Skylink service is available at http://skylink.telabria.com



Nexus Telecom Installs GPRS Monitoring System at T-Mobile Austria

T-Mobile Austria selected Nexus Telecom to install the NexusNETVIEW solution suite to effectively monitor the entire GPRS/UMTS packet-switched traffic. With the versatile multi-technology NexusNETVIEW platform, T-Mobile Austria selected the state-of-the-art service monitoring solution to fulfill best their challenging requirements for best service quality and highest customer satisfaction. With NexusNETVIEW, T-Mobile Austria will be able to perform detailed on-line monitoring and analysis of service performance, service usage statistics and network-wide fault tracking through GPRS/UMTS communication traces and in-depth protocol analysis. In addition, sophisticated CDR generation and traffic analysis features will boost revenue assurance, network and traffic management efficiency. The on-line CDR generation enables T-Mobile Austria to easily expand this solution towards GPRS/UMTS fraud detection.

The NexusNETVIEW surveillance system monitors the GPRS as well as UMTS SGSN and GGSN nodes, Border Gateways and traditional SS7 links. Passive probes collect all communication data from Gb, Gn/Gp, Gi, IuPS and Gr interfaces which are then correlated and fed into the Traffic/Service Monitoring and Communication Trace applications revealing "The Whole Truth" of network and service performance. According to Christoph Kupper, Marketing Director at Nexus Telecom, "for any end-to-end monitoring system it is now essential to collect communication data from a multitude of technologies to correlate, merge and visualize service performance parameters on a single platform".

Christoph Kupper

With the installation of NexusNETVIEW at T-Mobile Austria, Nexus Telecom strengthens its position within the T-Mobile group, in which also T-Mobile Germany deploys a large scale high performance NexusNETVIEW monitoring system for their GSM and GPRS networks.

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Asian Brand Drama: Who Needs Desperate Housewives? Who Will Win the High-Stakes Branding Battle Between eBay & Yahoo! in China? And will Google be the Spoiler?

According to Nick Wreden, CEO of a well-known international brand consultancy and the author of a new branding book, the upcoming fight to win the hearts, minds and wallets of an estimated 200 million Chinese Internet users by 2007 will shape the worldwide fortune and brands of eBay, Yahoo! and Google.

Nick Wreden

"Recent acquisitions by major online players have set the stage for a battle royale in the Chinese e-commerce market, which is growing an estimated 80 percent annually," says Wreden, CEO of FusionBrand and author of ProfitBrand: How to Increase the Profitability, Accountability and Sustainability of Brands, published by Kogan Page. "Who needs Desperate Housewives with unfolding drama like this?"

In 1999, former schoolteacher Jack Ma launched Alibaba.com from an apartment in Hangzhou, China. Alibaba.com has since grown into three online marketplaces serving the B2B (alibaba.com), B2C (china.alibaba.com) and C2C (taobao.com) marketplaces. Essentially, Alibaba.com serves as an e-commerce aggregator, bringing together buyers and sellers. Forbes magazine has named the firm one of the "Best of the Web" for five years running.

Alibaba.com® Global trade starts here.™

Alibaba.com succeeded because it filled a void. There was a dearth of printed catalogues and other tools to help buyers and sellers find one another. It sits in the middle of the world's manufacturing belt, with hundreds of thousands of factories and suppliers nearby. And the home-grown company understands Chinese culture and business practices well.

However, its business model could have never passed muster with US venture capitalists. Alibaba.com allows buyers and sellers to contact each other directly (a big eBay no-no), and the sites are largely free of charge. Revenue primarily comes from charging for premium content/positioning and from a secured payment service like PayPal.

Alibaba lorded over the Chinese market until 2003, when San Jose, Calif.-based eBay purchased EachNet, another Chinese e-commerce site, for $180 million. The stage was then set for a battle of the titans. eBay is one of the world's premier brands, with 2004 revenues of $3.27 billion. CEO Meg Whitman told analysts that China was a "must win" and "likely to be the defining measure of business success." It has promised to spend $100 million this year in China promoting its site, an overwhelming number considering that Alibaba's gross revenues totaled only $68 million in 2004.

Who will come out on top?

Wreden points out eBay's strengths and weaknesses in the coming battle. "eBay is a classic customer-economy brand, having grown with minimal advertising and lots of word of mouth from passionate advocates," he says. "It has also attracted a lot of negative press by raising fees, placing the burden of fraud detection on its buyers and sellers, and abysmal customer support that amounted to little more than automated emails."

EBay has initially come on strong in China, capturing an estimated 61 million Chinese users and about 55%-65% of the market. But the ultimate outcome is still in doubt, despite Whitman's hope that China becomes eBay's biggest market in 5-10 years. Internationally, eBay failed so miserably in Japan it was forced to exit the market in 2002. (Its track record is much better in other international markets.) Another weakness in China is the need to adhere to eBay's global platform, which hinders customization. Finally, it lacks a Chinese online payment platform like PayPal.

"But this is no longer a local David vs. international Goliath story. Now there are two compelling brand stories involving eBay, Yahoo! and Google," says Wreden.

In mid-August, Yahoo! paid $1 billion in cash for a 40% stake in Alibaba.com, raising the spectre of 1999 dotcom madness. And the stage is set for a Yahoo! vs. eBay story while Google is stealthily moving into the markets of both. To make the story even more interesting, the new Yahoo!-Alibaba combination includes 3721.com, a Chinese-language search engine that Yahoo! acquired last year for $120 million. 3721.com competes with Baidu.com (which went up 350% on its first day of trading on US markets), partly owned by Google.

Experts are split on who the ultimate online winner will be in China. Standard & Poor's downgraded eBay because of the threat, while the Economist magazine criticized Yahoo!'s long-term strategy. Yahoo! China's president even quit because he didn't think the Alibaba transaction would work.

Wreden is betting on Yahoo!.

"Initially, both will do well in a market expected to grow 80% annually for the next three years," says Wreden. "However, as much as I admire Meg Whitman and her savvy executive team, ultimately Yahoo! will win out, despite the fact it way overpaid for Alibaba.com."

Pointing out that Yahoo! started with human editors indexing the Internet, Wreden believes Yahoo!'s corporate DNA is based on personal skills and relationships, which will resonate in China much more than eBay's blind faith in computer technology and an efficient marketplace. Yahoo!'s combined capabilities will make it easier to find and buy products, a vital skill as China moves from communist to consumerist.

"PR in Asia is generally abysmal, but Jack Ma understands how to use the press better than any other Asian executive," says Wreden. He cites this soundbite at the press conference announcing the link with Yahoo!: "We're going after Baidu.com for the No. 1 spot in China. Google is history as far as I'm concerned."

Stay tuned for the outcome of this story. While it may not have the sex appeal of Desperate Housewives, it certainly has the capability to affect the future of online branding and e-commerce in China.

MyVoucher.Com Pioneers an Easy Way for Small Businesses to Increase Customer Flow

Businesses throughout the world now have the opportunity to increase customer flow and revenues without incurring any additional advertising costs. MyVoucher.com has recently launched to provide small businesses with a free service to create and manage electronic vouchers to use through their existing advertising campaigns.

Almost every local small- and medium-sized business uses print advertising to get more local customers walking through their door. By adding a customized MyVoucher link to their ad – such as www.MyVoucher.com/US/TheWidgetShop – and including it in their print advertising, their local customers will know that they carry electronic vouchers. A business can also link the electronic vouchers to its current website, making MyVoucher.com beneficial whether or not a business has a Website.

All customers have to do is visit the business's customized MyVoucher.com Web page. Once there, they just click on the available voucher, print it and take it in store for redemption. Customers can interact with the business by sending in feedback or asking a

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question, joining its mailing list and saving the "mini-site" to their favorites.

MyVoucher.com also offers businesses the ability to have a customer relationship management tool at their fingertips so they can build ongoing business relationships. Features such as an opt-in customer mailing list builder, which targets local customers, give the businesses more thrust from their current advertising budget.

With this incentive marketing, businesses can "measure" the level of response and easily gauge their return on investment through the return of discount vouchers and coupons. Together with the Internet, local print advertising and the electronic vouchers customers can find the latest offers from their favorite local merchants.

The free service provides a Web-based interface enabling small- and medium-sized businesses to create and manage their own electronic vouchers, which are hosted for free on a customized Web address. The interface also records important statistical information to measure an offer's effectiveness. The premium package provides the ability to create multiple electronic vouchers, a media library to upload images, the ability to utilize banners to generate extra revenue and build an opt-in customer mailing list enhanced with an auto-reply function.

TrafficWave.net LLC is Helping Home-Based Businesses Gain A Competitive Advantage in the Online Market Place

The ability to effectively target clients in the market place has traditionally belonged to large corporations with deep pockets and bloated advertising budgets. TrafficWave.net is leveling the playing field with its new Pay-Per-Click Search Directory, MySearchSite.net.

Small and home-based businesses face the same challenges as their larger corporate competitors: The need for sales. But they address that need in very different ways.

With seemingly unlimited ad budgets, large corporations can spend massive amounts of cash on advertising campaigns, branding programs, and more.

Small and home based businesses must maintain a laser-like focus on the bottom line and making sure that every ad dollar spent will bring the maximum return.

TrafficWave.net

Trafficwave.net LLC has just launched a powerful new search directory, MySearchSite.net, designed to help small and home based businesses do just that.

Advertisers on MySearchSite.net can control their ad costs by pre-determining how much they are willing to spend to get a visitor to their web site.

Brian Rooney, Managing Member of TrafficWave.net LLC is quoted as saying "When a company knows what their bottom line profit is per sale and they know how much it costs to make that sale, they are able to better manage their sales, growth, and cash flow.".

found it! MySearchSite.net

MySearchSite.net (located at http://www.mysearchsite.net) uses a keyword bidding system where advertisers bid on specific keywords and keyword phrases. An Advertiser that is selling nutritional products, for example, might bid on "vitamins". When someone searches for "vitamins" on MySearchSite.net, the advertiser's listing appears on the results page. If the visitor clicks the link to visit the advertiser's web site, their advertising account is debited for the pre-determined amount.

This approach helps advertisers control costs and helps visitors find exactly what they are actually looking for. It creates a win-win solution for the advertiser and their perspective customers.

Precision Links are Set to Revolutionize Text Link Advertising

A new text link advertising solution provides advertisers with an unprecedented level of control over the placement of their ads on any given site. Flexible, economical and scalable, Precision Links™ promises to deliver precisely targeted audiences to advertisers.

Perth, Western Australia – Precision Links™ is the latest text link advertising solution on offer at http://www.paidtextlinks.com. The new product aims to appeal to advertisers looking for a flexible and cost-effective online advertising solution.

The Precision Links™ solution gives advertisers control over the URLs on which their text link will appear. Advertisers can examine a site's pages for relevance, and advertise only on those pages closely related to their site's content. This approach offers several benefits: visitors to the advertising site are more likely to click on a closely related text link ad, and traffic generated from precisely targeted advertising has a higher chance of resulting in a sale or lead.

"When buying Precision Links, advertisers can visit specific pages they wish to advertise on to assess quality, subject matter and relevance, which provides better results than buying text links on the basis of subject matter or site statistics alone," remarked Dr Markus Weichselbaum, the inventor of Precision Links™.

Paidtextlinks.com's fully automated self-service system is designed to greatly simplify the text link buying process. Prices are automatically calculated and displayed, and source and target URLs are immediately validated to ensure a rapid and error-free transaction. Once paid for, all links are instantly displayed on the selected pages.

ALL-KARATE.COM

Subscriptions are available for periods of 1, 3, 6 and 12 months, with significant discounts for subscriptions longer than one month. Advertisers can choose from a wide range of quality sites designed to maximize exposure to their target audience. The inventory provides access to over 200 sites that accept paid text links, with a varied selection of popular sites such as http://www.all-karate.com, http://www.nutrim.net and http://www.surfyshop.com. All text link advertisements are validated daily to ensure that they are visible and viable. In keeping with this commitment to link viability, all links are clearly and prominently displayed, rather than being buried in an obscure area such as the page footer.

Like the standard index-page and run-of-site (ROS) links available at Paidtextlinks.com, Precision Links™ can be as short as just one line or as long the advertiser desires, with additional text before and after the clickable link. The base price for each link is based on one line of text and increases with the number of lines used, allowing for advertising text comprising full paragraphs with an embedded link.

Precision Links'™ flexibility allows advertisers to structure their online advertising campaign according to their individual needs, as they can precisely match their advertising text to the content of pages displaying their links. Budget-conscious advertisers benefit from ground-breaking low prices on Precision Links™, beginning at just $1 per link per month - a dramatic saving compared to the $15 and $30 minimum spend currently required for index-page and ROS advertisements. The price for Precision Links™ varies for different pages within a site, and increases depending on a page's traffic and popularity.

nutrim.net

"We believe that Precision Links represent a bona fide innovation in the field. None of our competitors offer online advertising that gives the buyer complete control over which pages will display their text link ad," commented Dr Weichselbaum. "Precision Links™ are a low risk solution for those new to text link advertising or those who wish to trial its effectiveness, since it's fully scalable and can be adapted to suit any budget."

For further information on Precision Links, please visit http://www.paidtextlinks.com/precisionlinks.html

SURFYSHOP.COM

People

Search Engine Marketing Agency Announces Additions to Management Team

Elixir Systems, a privately held company in the search engine marketing industry, announced today that it has appointed a new Director of Marketing and Director of Search to address high levels of growth.

Scottsdale, AZ - Search engine marketing specialists Elixir Systems, a privately held company, announced today that as a result of the rapid growth of their business they have appointed James Peggie as Director of Marketing and Lance Faulkner as Director of Search. These appointments are in response to the high levels of growth and strategic re-structuring of the company.

Fionn Downhill

"We have experienced 200% growth in the last 12 months, which comes with its own challenges," said Fionn Downhill, CEO of Elixir Systems. "We have re-structured the company in line with what is now required to deliver the same quality of service and results that has made us one of the leading suppliers of search engine marketing services in the industry."

As the Director of Marketing, James Peggie is responsible for the implementation and management of corporate marketing strategies. This involves promotional activities, brand strategy, public relations and corporate communications. He is also involved with developing corporate writing projects, presentations and marketing collateral. He works with clients to help them analyze their Internet presence and prepares search marketing strategies for individual projects. He is a renowned in the fields of online public relations, press release optimization and search engine reputation management. He is heavily involved in writing the Insights into Search Engine Marketing for Business Blog.

James has been involved with the Internet since 1995 when he developed an interest in search marketing strategy. Before joining the Elixir team he worked for Lynk Software, Inc, a developer of customer service and quality assurance software, in a marketing and Internet strategy position. Prior to that he owned and ran an eCommerce business. He has published articles on search marketing in numerous publications. James holds a Master of Business Administration degree.

Lance Faulkner brings a wealth of SEO experience and talent to the Elixir Systems team. He has been involved in the search marketing field for over five years and is a nationally renowned expert on natural (organic) search engine optimization and paid placement. During this time he has acquired extensive knowledge of how the major search engines function and how they determine their algorithms.

Lance provides maximum support for Elixir Systems clients and ensures that its tools, technology, and processes are continually updated to help achieve superior results. His research skills, problem solving abilities, and predictive analysis talents add extra value for Elixir System's clients.

elixir systems
SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Prior to joining Elixir Systems Lance worked with Rhino Internet Solutions where he created and developed their successful SEO program. He has also worked for iCrossing and Fox Rent a Car in managerial positions, helping to develop and implement their search marketing strategies. Before entering the search marketing field Lance spent over 10 years in the information research field with the Army.

Rhino

Lance is actively involved in furthering the field of search marketing through training and education programs he developed. He is also a highly respected industry speaker at both the local and national level. This includes the prestigious national search marketing showcase - Search Engine Strategies.

Elixir Systems are leaders in the field of search engine marketing and offer customized search strategies built around search engine optimization, paid search and online public relations. As no two businesses are the same the key to building a search strategy involves finding the right combination of these services. Elixir' is dedicated towards strong, long term business partnerships and to delivering the highest possible levels of service. They aim to achieve long term results that have a true impact on their clients' business success.

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HP Extends Client Management Software Portfolio with Simplified, Entry-priced Offering

PALO ALTO, Calif., Aug. 29, 2005

HP today introduced entry-priced software that provides customers who have limited IT budgets with an easy-to-use and quick-to-deploy enterprise management solution.

HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager, based on proven Radia technology, offers resource-constrained customers integrated inventory collection, software distribution and patch management, among other capabilities.

The product allows customers who place a premium on quick time to value and ease of use to invest in an entry-priced offering today and then, as their needs grow and evolve, upgrade to other fully featured and highly scalable solutions in the HP OpenView Configuration Management portfolio.

"The need to automate and manage change is significant to all businesses regardless of size," said Fred Broussard, research manager, PC and Device Management Software, IDC. "Solutions such as the entry-priced HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager allow HP and channel partners to be better positioned to offer customers a solution that can grow and evolve over time to meet changing business requirements."

HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager also lowers the barriers to entry for customers to begin the journey towards becoming an Adaptive Enterprise, in which business and IT are synchronized to capitalize on change.

"HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager provides an affordable, integrated solution for the complex and critical task of managing software in enterprise environments," said Eileen O'Brien, vice president of marketing, Personal Systems Group, HP. "HP is committed to developing solutions which provide real and valuable benefits to customers of all sizes, and today's announcement provides them with a very compelling growth path towards the full strength of the HP OpenView portfolio."

HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager makes software management intuitive

HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager is designed for maximum out-of-the-box functionality with little required customization. An installation wizard allows the product to be deployed with minimal training or consulting costs.

Key product capabilities include:

• Discovery of installed hardware and software assets;

• Discovery of vulnerabilities, deployment of security patches and continuous verification to protect PCs from security exposures;

• Distribution of software and updates to locally or remotely connected PCs;

• A single, easy-to-use management console;

• Built-in reports for inventory, security and operations;

• Support for Windows® client operating systems (2000, XP Professional).

"The new HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager product is a valuable addition to HP's portfolio of configuration management solutions," said Bob Bailey, executive vice president, Agilysys, Inc. "The product provides customers with an out-of-the-box solution that is easy to install, implement and use. The product will allow Agilysys to offer enterprise customers a software configuration management solution to meet their specific business requirements and budget constraints."

Pricing and availability

Estimated starting U.S. street pricing for HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager is $25 per seat license, including one-year free standard telephone support and product updates.(1) The product is expected to be available through HP and OpenView channel partners in October.

More information about the new HP OpenView Client Configuration Manager and other HP OpenView Configuration Management solutions is available at http://www.hp.com/go/managementsoftware.

About HP

HP is a technology solutions provider to consumers, businesses and institutions globally. The company's offerings span IT infrastructure, global services, business and home computing, and imaging and printing. For the four fiscal quarters ended July 31, 2005, HP revenue totaled $85.2 billion. More information about HP (NYSE, Nasdaq: HPQ) is available at http://www.hp.com.

BenQ Targets Gamers Worldwide With the Release of the FP71E+ LCD Multimedia Monitor

The FP71E+ features the propriety Senseye technology and a 8ms response time.

IRVINE, CA (August 29, 2005) - BenQ, a leading manufacturer of digital lifestyle devices, today announced its new FP71E+ 17-inch LCD multimedia monitor to target PC gamers and other graphic enthusiast. With the latest in BenQ image enhancement technology the FP71E+ offers superior image quality for those utilizing graphic-heavy applications.

BenQ
Enjoyment Matters

The FP71E+ offers several high-performance features such as BenQ proprietary Senseye technology that automatically improves image contrast, color and sharpness, an ultra-fast response time and a 500:1 contrast ratio that complements the monitors' grade "A" panels. The DVI connection is also featured on the FP71E+ allowing for better signal transmissions, and a more life-like color re-production making it ideal for video games and products with a large amount of graphics.

"The FP71E+ monitor is an ideal choice for gamers or graphic artist looking for a high-quality video performance," said Andrew Weis, Product Marketing Manager. "With BenQ's latest in image enhancement technology and specifications, this monitor definitely delivers the highest in image quality."

The FP71E+ will be available through approved BenQ distribution channels with an estimated MSRP of $329.

Acer Travelmate 4020 Accelerates Notebook Performance

Newest Centrino based System Delivers Both Innovation and Value While Setting a new Price/Performance Standard

acer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (August 30, 2005) - Acer® America Corporation, one of the leading worldwide suppliers of IT solutions, today introduced the TravelMateTM 4020 series to its award-winning line of TravelMate notebooks. The Acer TravelMate 4020 incorporates the Intel® Centrino Mobile Technology in a feature-rich package to deliver a high-performance two spindle solution with abundant expandability options and multimedia power. Featuring Intel Centrino Mobile Technology with PCI Express?, this newest TravelMate notebook, designed for both SOHO (Small Office/Home Office) and Small and Medium Business (SMB) environments, boasts a thin and light design with the mobility demanded by professionals on the go while maintaining the performance capabilities of a desktop solution.

The TravelMate 4020 series offers an excellent balance between performance, connectivity and value featuring the powerful state-of-the-art PCI Express technology and Intel® Centrino Mobile Technology. In addition to the excellent performance guaranteed by the Intel® Pentium® M Processor 725, the TravelMate 4020 series also features a 15.4" WXGA widescreen color TFT LCD, with picture resolution of up41

to 1280 x 800 pixels and Intel® 915GM integrated 3D graphics featuring an Intel® Graphics Media Accelerator 900 and 64MB dynamically allocated video memory.

The TravelMate 4020 notebooks come with Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional pre-installed (with Recovery CD) in addition to a complete selection of useful utilities. These utilities include Acer eManager (ePresentation, eSetting, ePowerManagement and eRecovery) and Acer GridVista. The first offering provides rapid and intuitive access to a wealth of notebook management utilities, while the second allows up to four windows to be screened simultaneously, each associated with a different application.

Comprehensive Flexibility

The Acer TravelMate 4020 is an advanced, full-featured notebook, offering an Intel Pentium M processor, the latest Intel 915GM Express chipset and a 400MHz Front System Bus. Also featuring PCI Express ?, a brilliant 15.4" WXGA wide-screen display, 512 MB of DDR II upgradeable to 2048MB, and an integrated Intel Graphics Media Accelerator 900 video adapter with up to 64MB of dedicated DDR video memory for outstanding multimedia performance. In addition to wireless 802.11b/g and Bluetooth support, the TravelMate 4020 offers 3 USB 2.0 ports, 10/100 LAN connection, and a 56K V.92 modem.

This two-spindled notebook incorporates up to a 60GB hard drive as well as an integrated CDRW/DVD-ROM combo drive. Preloaded with Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional, and weighing just 6.5 pounds, the TravelMate 4020 guarantees excellent performance for even the most demanding mobile business applications.

Pricing

The TravelMate 4020 is available through Acer Authorized Resellers throughout North America starting at approximately $899.

TravelMate 4021WLCi

- Intel® Pentium® M Processor 725 (2MB L2 cache, 1.6GHz, 400MHz FSB)
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- 512MB (256/256) DDR2 400 SDRAM
- 60GB hard drive o CD-RW/DVD ROM Combo drive
- Intel® Graphics Media Accelerator 900
- 802.11b/g, WLAN, 10/100 LAN, V.92 Modem
- 15.4" WXGA (1280 x 800) LCD
- $899

About Acer America Corporation

Established in 1984 as a subsidiary of Acer Inc., Acer America Corporation designs and markets client and server solutions for professionals who require reliability, enhanced productivity and greater value of ownership. As one of the largest global suppliers of PC's, more than 50 million Acer systems have been purchased throughout the world, solutions for living, learning and working. Acer America's award-winning products include tablet PCs, desktop PCs, notebook computers, servers, displays and peripheral solutions for business, government, education and home users. The pan Acer Group employs 39,000 people supporting dealers and distributors in over 100 countries. For more information about Acer America, please visit the website at: www.acer.com/us.

NEC Display Solutions Adds New Desktop Monitors to its Award-Winning LCD Enterprise Line

New 17-, 19- and 21-inch Displays Deliver Feature-Rich Performance at Value-Driven Prices

CHICAGO - August, 23, 2005 - NEC Display Solutions of America, Inc., the leading stand-alone provider of flat panel desktop displays, today introduced three new additions to its MultiSync 70 Series LCD desktop display line. Adding to the reputation of the acclaimed MultiSync line of monitors, the new 17-, 19- and 21-inch displays deliver high-resolution capabilities and advanced digital technology at value-driven prices. The notable new feature in the new NEC MultiSync LCD1770VX and LCD1970VX models, which are replacing the LCD1770V and LCD1970V displays, include NEC's Ambix® dual input technology, providing both a traditional analog input and a DVI connection for enhanced compati-

bility with today's and tomorrow's PCs. By combining outstanding image quality, reliability and performance, the new 17-inch and 19-inch models are some of the most full-featured, digital-ready LCD desktop displays in the value category.

The all new NEC MultiSync LCD2170NX boasts a large 21-inch viewable screen image, an ultra high 1600 x 1200 native resolution, an 8-millisecond response time, a 1000:1 contrast ratio and a brightness level of 300 cd/m2, making it one of the brightest and fastest 21-inch displays on the market. The MultiSync LCD2170NX monitor also features a conveniently located, fully integrated 4-port powered USB Hub as well as a full-featured stand that includes height adjustment, tilt and swivel.

"The MultiSync 70 Series of desktop LCD displays are the center pieces of our enterprise product offering," said Scott Hoaglund, product manager for NEC Display Solutions. "By delivering the features, functions and value our business customers require today, while including future-ready components for their needs of tomorrow, these new displays promise to be a big hit with today's ROI-driven IT professionals."

Key features in the new MultiSync LCD1770VX and LCD1970VX models include:

• Thin-frame design allows more viewable image and less of the monitor bezel, while freeing up more horizontal and vertical desktop space for multiple-monitor applications

• Height-adjustable stand adds flexibility and comfort for optimal viewing

• No Touch Auto Adjust reduces setup time and provides optimal image settings upon initial power-on

• Ambix® dual-input technology allows for digital/analog compatibility with upgraded video cards and software as well as connection to two systems

• NaViSet software offers an expanded and intuitive graphical interface, allowing easier OSM display settings adjustments via mouse and keyboard

• Multi-directional NaViKey allows for easy screen setting adjustments

• Rapid Response technology delivers virtually uninterrupted, undistorted viewing of high-speed, full-motion video

Estimated street prices for the new NEC MultiSync 70 Series products are: $345 for the MultiSync LCD1770VX, $460 for the MultiSync LCD1970VX and $1,180 for the MultiSync LCD2170NX. All of the products are available for immediate delivery.

SAMSUNG Electronics Adds Gigabyte Densities to MultiMediaCard Line-up

SEOUL , Korea - August 29, 2005 : Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd., the leader in advanced semiconductor technology, today announced that it is sampling Gigabyte (GB) MultiMediaCards (MMCs) with customers: 1GB and 2GB MMC plus ™ cards, and the industry's first 1GB MMC mobile ™ card. The higher densities and faster speeds of Samsung's Version 4.1 memory cards will allow consumers to gain higher performance from advanced mobile consumer devices, such as mobile phones, digital still cameras (DSCs), PDAs, MP3 music players and PMPs (portable multimedia players).

The new cards are capable of transmitting data at 52MBytes per second, up to 20 times faster than previous MMC versions, by supporting wider (x4 and x8) bus widths and faster clock speeds (up to 52MHz).

The industry's first gigabyte-density MMC mobile devices are targeted at mobile phone applications . The memory card is half the size of the MMC plus and capable of dual-voltage support (1.8 or 3.3V), satisfying both the low

voltage and the low power consumption requirements for mobile phones.

The new MMC plus devices , which run on 3.3V and are up to three times faster than SD ™ Memory Cards, are well-suited for digital cameras, which require fast response times for manipulating advanced features.

The new gigabyte cards add to Samsung's original line-up of 64MByte, 128MByte, 256MByte and 512MByte MMC cards. The 1GB MMC mobile, as well as the 1GB and 2GB MMC plus cards are available now for customer sampling with mass production slated for next month. Each MMC device is compatible with existing MMC (Version 4.1) specifications, established by the MultiMediaCard Association (MMCA).

The MMCA (www.mmca.org), a global association formed in 1998 to develop international MMC standards for memory, is addressing market demands for smaller form factors, higher performance and lower power consumption in the enactment of those standards.

According to market research firm Gartner, the global MMC market is expected to grow from $796 million this year to about $1.6 billion by 2008, at a 26 percent compounded annual growth rate.

About Samsung Electronics

Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd. is a global leader in semiconductor, telecommunication, digital media and digital convergence technologies with 2004 parent company sales of US$55.2 billion and net income of US$10.3 billion. Employing approximately 113,000 people in over 9 0 offices in 48 countries, the company consists of five main business units: Digital Appliance Business, Digital Media Business, LCD Business, Semiconductor Business and Telecommunication Network Business. Recognized as one of the fastest growing brands, Samsung Electronics is the world's largest producer of color monitors, color TVs, memory chips and TFT-LCDs. For more information, please visit www.samsung.com.

SAMSUNG Unveils its New Satellite DMB Phone

Seoul , Korea , - August 26 , 2005 - Samsung Electronics, a leading provider of mobile phones, announced the launch of its fourth satellite DMB phone (model: SCH-B250) following the release of the B100, B130 and B200.

Samsung's new B250 boasts more compact design and improved features while maintaining the basic product concept of previous DMB phones which supports horizontal viewing. The B250 is also the smallest Samsung DMB handset ever.

The B250 is a folder type with pivotal LCD screen which rotate 90 degrees into landscape mode. The B250 follows the same basic design as the hugely popular SCH-V500 camera phone that went on the market in August of last year.

Samsung has come up with innovative horizontal LCD design since last year with V500 and is expanding this design trend for mobile phones and especially for DMB phones.

With the B250, users can make phone calls or send and receive text messages even while watching TV. The DMB broadcast received by the phone can also be relayed to a regular TV.

The B250 has external buttons which allow user to play MP3 files without opening the phone. The 128-polyphonic sound chip has been built in to provide exquisite ring tones.

The B250 is also equipped with a 2megapixel camera and the photo editing function has been upgraded which allows the user to change facial expressions on photos such as turning a smiling face into one showing anger. Various other effects are also possible such as changing the picture frame design.

The File Viewer function provides access to Microsoft Office or PDF files, and a 330,000-word dictionary is included in the software.

The B250 also supports external memory of 256MB, IrDA, and mobile banking capabilities for user convenience.

The phone is available in Korea at around USD 700 .

• SCH-B250 Specifications CDMA2000 1x EV-DO (800MHz)

• Mobile TV (Satellite DMB)

• 2 Megapixel / Flash

• Video Recording (MPEG4) & Messaging

• VOD / MOD

• Display : 262,144-color TFT-LCD (240 x 320 pixels)

• MP3 Player

• 128 Polyphonic Ringtones

• TransFlash External Memory Support

• IrDA / Remote Controller

• TV Output Support

• 94.7 x 48 x 28.5 mm

• 144 g

• About DVB-H

Building on the Digital Video Broadcasting Project's (DVB) DVB-T transmission standard, DVB-H includes the following features for handheld and devices: lower battery consumption, cell identifiers to support quicker signal scanning, frequency handover, and signal strengthening in a mobile environment. This has been achieved by introducing time-slicing for increased power savings, adding COFDM 4K mode reception and MPE-FEC decoding, includign in-depth de-interleaver for additional robustness and mobility, plus delivering signaling enhancements.

PANASONIC EXTENDS PLASMA TV LEADERSHIP WITH NEW, ATTRACTIVE SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICING ON BEST-SELLING PLASMA TVs

SECAUCUS, NJ (Aug. 31, 2005) Panasonic, which has just completed a full year as the market leader in Plasma television, confirmed that it will mark the occasion by helping to make the large-screen digital flat panel televisions more appealing to consumers than ever before. Starting September 1, Panasonic will reduce the suggested retail prices of its Plasma TVs by an average $500 (see table below).

Panasonic

"Plasma has become the standard against which all other TVs are measured," said Andrew Nelkin, vice president of Panasonic Consumer Electronics Company's Display Group. "And we are very pleased to be at the front of the plasma movement. Panasonic Plasma TV represents a very attractive proposition for consumers - superb color and picture quality in a large screen flat-panel TV at much more affordable prices."

With the new pricing, the suggested retail price for America's best-selling plasma TV, the 42-inch Panasonic TH-42PD50U EDTV, will fall below $2,000 for the first time.

"Panasonic has been investing in the development of plasma panel technology for years," Mr. Nelkin said. "As a result, we have both the technological expertise and expanding manufacturing capacity to meet surging consumer demand for Plasma TV."

"Panasonic is the largest and one of the fastest growing Plasma TV brands in North America and is driving the growth of this rapidly rising market," said Ross Young, president and CEO of Austin, Texas-based display industry research and consulting group DisplaySearch. "North American Plasma TV shipments increased 50% in the first half of 2005 versus the first half of 2004 with even faster growth expected in the second half of 2005. For the year, Plasma TV sales are expected to rise 62% in North America to over 1.6 million units and Panasonic is a big reason why. Within this expanding market, Panasonic's share rose from 24% to 33% in Q2 '05 and it is well positioned to further increase its share due to its attractive pricing, excellent quality, internal production and broad distribution."

In the week ending August 20, the most recent week for which data is available, NPD Group/NPD Techworld reports that Panasonic Plasma TV sales accounted for an unprecedented 44% of the market, based on its weekly point-of-sales data.

About Panasonic

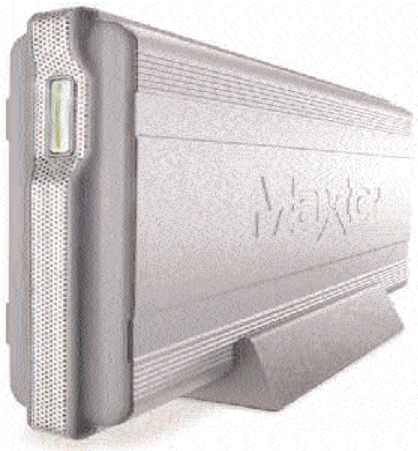
Panasonic Consumer Electronics Company is the digital electronics arm of Panasonic Corporation of North America, the principal U.S. subsidiary of Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Ltd. (NYSE: MC). Based in Secaucus, NJ, the company is the hub of Panasonic's marketing, sales and service and R&D operations in North America. For more information on Panasonic, its parent company and products, visit www.panasonic.com.

Maxtor Centralizes File Sharing And Backup

New Maxtor Shared Storage Plus ™ Drive Adds Automated Backup, Simplifies Sharing and Provides a Built-In Media Server for Streaming Video, Music and Photos on Networks

MILPITAS, CA - August 31, 2005 - Continuing its tradition of innovative storage solutions, Maxtor Corporation (NYSE: MXO) announced today that it is making it simpler than ever to store, share, print and back up computer files, digital photos, music and videos from one central location on home or small office networks. Using the company's renowned integrated Maxtor? backup software, consumers and small businesses can easily back up data from their PCs to the new Maxtor Shared Storage Plus drive for added data protection. The new drive, which begins shipping in October with capacities of up to a half-terabyte (500GB), is also the company's first network drive that extends the advantages of centralized storage to digital entertainment devices. Using the new drive's built-in media server, consumers and small businesses can share and stream digital data to multiple devices on the network, without requiring routing through a PC.

The new drive is ideal for small business owners with multiple PCs on wired or wireless networks, who want to simultaneously backup, share and print digital files via one centralized location. The drive provides nearly effortless data management and security for up to 20 users, which allows small business owners to free themselves of the mundane, yet critical task of ensuring that every computer's precious data is backed up frequently. Maxtor's integrated and easy-to-use software suite allows people to spend more time on productive, enjoyable tasks, such as running their business or spending more time with their families. The Maxtor Shared Storage Plus drive is available in a 200GB, 300GB, or 500GB storage capacity, and includes two USB ports to connect and share two USB printers or two additional external storage drives, or one of each.



When connected to a home network, the Maxtor Shared Storage Plus drive acts as a centralized digital entertainment media server. One of the drive's software features provides the ability to stream media content on compatible UPnP AV digital media adapters for viewing on entertainment devices throughout the network. A family, for instance, could simultaneously listen to a music collection via a networked sound system upstairs, play movies on a networked theatre system in the living room, and view a slide show of recent vacation photos on a laptop in the kitchen. Based on Mediabolic's Media Server software, which is designed to DLNA guidelines, the Maxtor Shared Storage Plus drive requires no active PC on the network to share and stream digital files.

"With Maxtor Shared Storage Plus, we've added software features to maximize the simplicity and value for home and small business networks, such as the critical ability to back up precious digital files to the drive and built-in servers for shared printing and media streaming," said Stacey Lund, vice president of marketing, Maxtor Branded Products Group. "Now our simple and elegant Maxtor backup experience is available across the entire family of Maxtor OneTouch™ external drives and Maxtor Shared Storage drives for consumers and small businesses."

The drive's new SimpleView™ feature, which acts like a built-in IT administrator, provides detailed backup and storage status at a glance to all users on the network. In addition, the exclusive user-friendly wizard interface easily designates shared folders for full or limited access for privacy, sets backup schedules and simplifies restoring files. Organizing digital files is a breeze with Maxtor's exclusive Drag and Sort™ feature, which automatically identifies and sorts more than 100 different Windows file types and puts them in specific music, photo, movie, Web, software or

documents folders.

Setting up the Maxtor Shared Storage Plus drive on a home or small office/home office (SOHO) network is simple. The drive plugs into a network router via a 10/100 Ethernet port, and installs quickly with the help of the drive's automatic network configuration. Once the drive is on the network, users simply run a quick start CD on each networked PC to automatically receive a desktop icon that gives them easy access to a shared public folder and a set of personal password-protected private network folders.

Maxtor Shared Storage Plus drives will be available in October at major U.S. retailers, distributors and online stores, as well as at www.maxstore.com. Worldwide availability will begin in November 2005. Please visit www.maxstore.com for local distribution channels and retail outlets. The manufacturer suggested retail price is $299.95 for the 200GB drive, $399.95 for the 300GB drive, and $499.95 for the 500GB drive.

As part of Maxtor's ongoing commitment to provide its existing customers with best-in-class service and support, those who have purchased the original award-winning Maxtor Shared Storage drive can easily upgrade their drive's software starting in October to enable Maxtor Shared Storage Plus functionality at no additional charge. To do so, customers can visit Maxtor's support site at http://www.maxtor.com/MSSPlus/ for more details.

New Olympus Stylus 600 Delivers Superior Performance In Compact, All-Weather Design

Premium Size 2.5-Inch LCD, 6-Megapixel CCD, and All-Weather Design with New Features and Functions

Melville, New York, August 29, 2005 - Defined by all-weather durability and stylish ergonomic design, the Olympus Stylus series of digital cameras are among the most popular point-and-shoot cameras in history. The new Stylus 600 continues this tradition, adding advanced performance and enhanced usability with the new Bright Capture Technology for improved low light photography and the inclusion of a premium size 2.5-inch LCD, as well as the TruePic TURBO Image Processor for high image quality and fast response time, 26 shooting modes for versatility, a built-in Help Guide for on-the-fly instruction, and a 6.0-megapixel image sensor for high-resolution large format prints.

"Over the years, Stylus cameras have come to enjoy a legacy as the best selling point-and-shoot camera in history," said Tomoko Matsunaga, product manager, Olympus Imaging America Inc. "The Stylus 600 continues the Stylus tradition of all-weather durability and stylish compact design, adding new features for added performance and enhanced usability."

All-Weather Durability

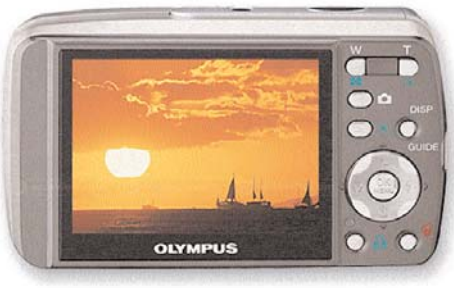
Typically water and photography are a bad combination, limiting your outdoor photography options when rain, snow or sea are involved. But the compact, all-weather Stylus 600 can go virtually anywhere you can. The body construction is durable and lightweight with rubber gaskets throughout the interior to ensure that rain, sleet, snow won't get in the way of great photos .

Bright Capture Technology for Low-Light Photography

There are times when you want to photograph subjects in low light without having to use a flash - such as when trying to capture the softness and warmth of a candlelit dinner, or natural skin tones in subdued lighting. Olympus' new Bright Capture Technology makes it possible to clearly compose subjects on the LCD, and with high sensitivity options (up to ISO 1600) and an enhanced auto-focus, even action photos can be captured in low levels of ambient light.

2.5-Inch Premium Size LCD

With the large 2.5-inch LCD, the Stylus 600 is a veritable walking photo album! The large LCD makes it easier to see clear images when composing shots, which you can then gather your friends around to review in vivid detail without having to download to a computer.



6.0-Megapixel Image Sensor for Large-Format Prints

The 6.0-megapixel CCD image sensor delivers super high-quality images that are consistently sharp and vivid even in large-format prints.

High Quality Olympus Lens Elements

Olympus photos are known worldwide for sharp, vibrant image quality. This is achieved through a number of key technologies, such as Olympus' new high-refractive-index aspherical lens elements, designed specifically for digital cameras. The lens provides the equivalent of 35 to 105 mm focal length, f 3.1 - f 5.2 in 35mm photography, with 15x combined total zoom (3x optical and 5x digital) to bring the action closer, and a Super Macro Mode that captures details as nuanced as the iridescent petals of a flower, from as close as 2.8 inches.

Style and Ergonomics

The Stylus 600 is defined by high-performance, durability and style. In addition to the all-weather construction that made the Stylus famous, the Stylus 600 features clean lines and smooth, rounded edges that make it comfortable to hold and easy to handle. At a compact size of 3.8" (W) x 2.2" (H) x 1.0" (D) the camera fits snugly into a pocket and won't crowd a backpack. The stainless steel lens barrier tucks away inside the camera body with a snap when powered on, and protects the lens with an impenetrable seal when closed.

TruePic TURBO™ for High-Speed Response

Olympus' exclusive TruePic TURBO™ Image Processor enhances image quality and delivers faster overall processing speeds for rapid startup, shutter release and playback. TruePic TURBO TM enables the Stylus 600 to capture information from all 6.0 million pixels with pixel "micro-smoothing" that delivers clearer and more color-accurate photos, even at lower resolutions. The fast startup of less than one second and nearly instant shutter release time ensures a high-speed response so you are always ready to take great pictures.

26 Selectable Shooting Modes

The Stylus 600 makes it easy to capture great images in a variety of lighting situations with 24 pre-programmed scene modes, such as Night Scene, Indoor Portrait or Cuisine Mode. And with its QuickTime ® Movie Mode, the Stylus 600 can record movies of any length, limited only by the size of the internal memory or xD-Picture C ard in the camera.

OLYMPUS

Your Vision, Our Future

Help Guide for Added Ease-of-Use

With the new Help Guide function, the Stylus 600 makes every last one of its features accessible, even to novice users. By simply pressing the Guide button on the back of the camera, users can access brief descriptions of each of the camera's functions and scene modes.

PictBridge Enabled - No Computer Necessary!

The power of PictBridge technology enables photos to be printed directly from the Stylus 600 to any PictBridge-enabled printer without using a computer. And the new one-touch printing button makes printing a single-step process. Printing and sharing images has never been easier!

In-camera Editing

With in-camera editing features such as Red-Eye Fix, image composition with the option to add a built-in frame or text, and color brightness or saturation adjustments, users can edit photos on the fly - no longer do you have to tool around with computers and editing software for simple image touch-ups!

Underwater Photography

The new PT-029 underwater housing is created specially for the Stylus 600 - so you can take your camera with you on your underwater excursions. The large 2.5-inch LCD, compact body size and three underwater scene modes make it the perfect camera to take along diving. And with the new Bright Capture Technology you'll be able to easily preview images on the LCD even in the darkness of under water.

Easy USB Auto-Connect

Connecting the Stylus 600 to a computer is easy with the USB Auto-Connect feature, which connects directly via USB 2.0 cable and requires no software.

OLYMPUS Master™ Software

OLYMPUS Master™ software provides the ultimate in digital imaging management. An intuitive user interface makes downloading to your computer quick and simple, and images are searchable by date or keyword in the Calendar View. And with one-click editing tools, such as red-eye reduction, images can be touched up before printing or emailing. Online support, templates, firmware upgrades and other user services are just a mouse-click away.

Availability

The Stylus 600 will be available in September 2005. It includes: Wrist Strap, Camera WIN/Mac USB Cable,

Video cable, Li-12B Li-Ion Rechargeable Battery and Charger, Quick Start Guide, Basic Instruction Manual, Warranty Card, CD-ROM with OLYMPUS Master Software, and Camera Advanced manual.

U.S. Pricing

Stylus 600 Estimated Street Price: $ 299 .99 (U.S.)

For more information, review units, product specifications and high-resolution images of the Stylus 600, contact Heather Snow, Mullen Public Relations, 978-468-8934, heather.snow@mullen.com, or Chris Sluka, senior public relations manager, Olympus Imaging America Inc, Two Corporate Center Dr., P.O. Box 9058 Melville, NY 11747-9058, ph: (631) 844-5000 (800) 622-6372, Fax: (631) 844-5262.

Olympus Debuts New "Easy And Fun" Digital Camera Series Designed For Effortless Photography

New "FE" Line of Cameras Have Built-in Help Guide, Easy Printing, " One Touch" Operation, Pre-Set Shooting Modes for Every Situation

Melville, New York, August 29, 2005 - Olympus just flattened the digital photography learning curve today with the introduction of its new easy-to-use FE Series digital cameras. The FE-100, FE-110 and FE-120 are 4.0-, 5.0- and 6.0-megapixel models that pack more than just high resolution into compact and light bodies - they take the work out

of digital photography so you can focus on having fun. The cameras feature a built-in Help Guide so you don't have to consult a manual; easy printing directly to a printer; an uncomplicated "One Touch " design with separate buttons for shooting, playing back and erasing digital images ; several scene modes to get the right effect in any setting, and more.

"Our new FE Series cameras are all about effortless picture taking," said Naoki Tai, product manager, Olympus Imaging America Inc. "Beginner photographers are searching for a way to bring subjects closer, easily print large print sizes, and get great-looking results in a range of situations without having to work hard. The FE cameras give them all of these benefits and a whole lot more."

Built-in Help Guide for Easy Operation

The cameras' simple menus incorporate a new Help Guide with images and brief descriptions of frequently used functions and shooting mode to help users determine the settings best suited to their shooting situation and purpose without having to stop to consult a printed manual.

Easy Printing without Computer

With the power of PictBridge technology, photos can be printed directly from the camera to any PictBridge-enabled printer, such as the Olympus P-11 Digital Photo Printer, without using a computer. Printing and sharing images has never been easier, and the P-11's photo lab-quality dye-sublimation printing produces archival-quality prints in rich color.

One Touch Design - Quick and Easy Access with Individual Buttons

The FE Series cameras feature an easy-to-use "One Touch" design with individual buttons for shooting, reviewing and deleting images conveniently located on the body of the cameras so that frequently used functions can be easily accessed. Macro mode, Flash mode and a self-timer are located on an arrow pad at your fingertips for quick use while setting up the perfect composition.

Pre-Set Shooting Modes Makes It Easy to Capture Great Images

The inclusion of shooting modes accessed via a rotating dial and menu button on the back of the camera, makes it easy to capture great images in a variety of lighting situations, such as Sunset, Portrait, and Night Scene. A QuickTime ® Movie mode enables users to create short movies of events that can be emailed to family and friends. And a new frame integration function enables users to select various colorful, decorative borders for favorite pictures to print or email to friends.

Superior Picture Quality with No Effort

The 2.8x optical zoom lens of the FE-100 and FE-110 cameras is a 6.2 - 17.4mm (38 - 106mm equivalent in 35mm photography) that combines with a 4x digital zoom to deliver a total 11x zoom, so virtually no photo opportunity is out of reach. The high-resolution CCD image sensors of the FE Series cameras capture your images in all their detail, and then enable you to print them without loss of clarity. The cameras produce high-quality prints that can be cropped and enlarged to 11 x 14 inches and larger.

Simple Connection to PC

Connecting any FE Series camera to a computer is easy with the USB Auto Connect feature, which connects the camera directly via USB 2.0 cable and requires no software.

OLYMPUS Master Software Makes It Simple to Arrange Your Pictures.

OLYMPUS Master software provides the ultimate in digital imaging management. An intuitive user interface makes downloading to your computer quick and simple, and images are searchable by date or keyword in the Calendar View. With one-click editing tools, such as red-eye reduction, images can be touched up before printing or emailing. Online support, templates and other user services are just a mouse-click away.

Get Even More Features with FE-120

For those who want the same key features of the FE-100 and FE-110 as described above, plus a little bit more, Olympus has built the FE-120 with higher resolution, Olympus' exclusive TruePic TURBO™ Image Processor that enhances image quality and delivers faster overall processing speeds for rapid startup, shutter release and playback, plus 19 scene modes, the ability to add special frames to prints, a 1.8-inch LCD, and a 3x optical zoom lens (38-114mm equivalent in 35mm photography f2.8 - f4.9) that combines with a 4x digital zoom to deliver a total 12x zoom.

Availability

The FE-100, 110 and 120 will be available in September 2005.

The FE-100/110 include: 16MB xD-Picture Card™ (FE-110 only), (2) AA Alkaline Batteries, USB Cable (Win/Mac) , Video Cable, Wrist Strap, Quick Start Guide, Basic Instruction Manual, CD-ROM with OLYMPUS Master Software and Advanced Instruction Manual, Warranty Card.

The FE-120 includes: 32MB xD-Picture Card, (2) AA Alkaline Batteries, USB Cable (Win/Mac) , Wrist Strap, Quick Start Guide, Quick Reference Guide , Basic Instruction Manual, CD-ROM with OLYMPUS Master Software and Advanced Instruction Manual, Warranty Card.

U.S. Pricing

FE-100 Estimated Street Price: $149.99 (U.S.)

FE-110 Estimated Street Price: $199.99 (U.S.)

FE-120 Estimated Street Price: $2 2 9.99 (U.S.)

For more information, review units, product specifications and high-resolution images of the FE Series products, Michael Bourne, Mullen Public Relations, 978-468-8953, michael.bourne@mullen.com , or Chris Sluka, senior public relations manager, Olympus Imaging America Inc, Two Corporate Center Dr., P.O. Box 9058 Melville, NY 11747-9058, ph: (631) 844-5000 (800) 622-6372, Fax: (631) 844-5262.

Olympus Announces Launch Of New SP-Series Digital Cameras Designed To Deliver Performance And Creative Control

New SP-310 and SP-350 Offers Advanced Manual Controls, 30 Shooting Modes and a Large 2.5-Inch Premium Size LCD

Melville, New York, August 29, 2005 - With the release of two new SP-series digital cameras, the 7.0-megapixel SP-310 and the 8.o-megapixel SP-350, Olympus introduces state-of-the-art specialized features that enable photographers of all skill levels to express their creative vision. Both cameras offer the option of either manual settings for creative control or 30 selectable shooting modes for convenience and ease-of-use, along with optional add-on accessory lenses, an optional underwater housing, and a large, easy-to-view 2.5-inch premium size LCD. The SP-310 and SP-350 are highly versatile cameras, powerful enough to satisfy the creative needs of the advanced user,

and expansive enough to grow as users develop their talent.

"With the new SP-series digital cameras, Olympus offers a selection of cameras that are specifically designed for users with a variety of needs and photography skills," said John McGuire, product manager, Olympus Imaging America Inc. "The SP-310 and SP-350 each offer users the versatility of an advanced fully-featured camera and an easy-to-use point-and-shoot in one compact unit."

High Resolution Image Sensor for Large-Format Prints

The SP-310 features a high resolution 7.0-megapixel CCD image sensor, and the SP-350 features an even higher resolution 8.0-megapixel CCD, to deliver super high-quality images that are consistently sharp and vivid even in large-format prints.

2.5-Inch Premium Size LCD

Composing and reviewing images is far easier when you don't have to squint. The 115,000-pixel anti-glare LCD enables you to view images in large and vivid detail. What's more, you don't have to download and print images each time you want to share them - you can treat your friends and family to a slide show right on the back of your camera. With the large 2.5-inch LCD, the SP-310 and SP-350 are veritable walking photo albums!

PictBridge Enabled - No Computer Necessary!

The power of PictBridge technology enables photos to be printed directly from the camera to any PictBridge-enabled printer without using a computer. And the new one-touch printing button makes printing a single-step process. Printing and sharing images has never been easier!

Manual Settings for Added Creative Control

The addition of manual Aperture Priority and Shutter Priority modes gives users versatility and control for optimal performance in any situation. Users can express their creative vision - adjusting the f-stop for detailed portraits with softened backgrounds, or slowing the exposure speed to create the blurred effect of motion.

30 Selectable Shooting Modes

The SP-310 and SP-350 make it easy to capture great images in a variety of lighting situations with 24 pre-programmed scene modes, such as Night Scene, Indoor Portrait or Cuisine Mode. And with its QuickTime ® Movie Mode, the cameras can record movies of any length, limited only by the size of the internal memory or xD-Picture C ard in the camera.

Accessory Lenses & Flashes for Expanded Capabilities

Olympus' SP-series cameras feature a threaded barrel, which enables easy attachment of add-on wide angle or telephoto conversion lenses for even more creative control. Compatible accessory lenses include the WCON-07F wide angle lens, which enables a wider field of view for shooting skylines, landscapes or group shots, and the TCON-17F telephoto conversion lens, which extends the camera's magnification capability by 1.7 times for bringing subjects dramatically closer, great for shooting sports events, concerts or wildlife.

The SP-350 also has a hot shoe for external flashes, providing additional versatility for more advanced shots when difficult lighting is an issue.

TruePic TURBO™ for High-Speed Response

Olympus' exclusive TruePic TURBO™ Image Processor enhances image quality and delivers faster overall processing speeds for rapid startup, shutter release and playback. TruePic TURBO TM enable the cameras to capture information with pixel "micro-smoothing" that delivers clearer and more color-accurate photos, even at lower resolutions. The fast startup of less than one second and nearly instant shutter release time ensures a high-speed response so you are always ready to take great pictures.

High Quality Olympus Lens Elements

Olympus photos are known worldwide for sharp, vibrant image quality. This is achieved through a number of key technologies, such as Olympus' new high-refractive-index aspherical lens elements, designed specifically for digital cameras. The lens provides the equivalent of 38 to 114 mm focal length, f2.8 - f 4.9 in 35mm photography, with 15x combined total zoom (3x optical and 5x digital) to bring the action closer, and a Super Macro Mode that captures details as nuanced as the iridescent petals of a flower, from as close as 2 cm . In-camera Editing

With in-camera editing features such as Red-Eye Fix, color brightness and saturation adjustments, users can edit photos on the fly - no longer do you have to tool around with computers and editing software for simple image touch-ups!

Style and Ergonomics

With the new SP-series cameras, Olympus returns to the traditional, compact appearance of its traditional range-finder cameras. At a compact size of just 3.9 " W x 2.6" H x 1.4" D and less than 7 ounces, tucks away easily into a pocket or backpack. The addition of an ergonomic grip makes it easy to hold with one hand, for capturing those photo ops when you are, literally, on the run.

Underwater Photography

The new PT-030 underwater housing is created specially for the SP-310/SP-350 cameras - so you can take your camera with you on your underwater excursions. The large 2.5-inch premium size LCD, compact body size and three underwater scene modes make it the perfect camera to take along diving.

OLYMPUS
Your Vision, Our Future

Easy USB Auto-Connect br>Connecting the camera to a computer is easy with the USB Auto-Connect feature, which connects directly via USB 2.0 cable and requires no software.

OLYMPUS Master™ Software

OLYMPUS Master™ software provides the ultimate in digital imaging management. An intuitive user interface makes downloading to your computer quick and simple, and images are searchable by date or keyword in the Calendar View. And with one-click editing tools, such as red-eye reduction, images can be touched up before printing or emailing. Online support, templates, firmware upgrades and other user services are just a mouse-click away.

Availability

The SP-310 and SP-350 will be available in October 2005. Each includes: Wrist Strap, Camera WIN/Mac USB Cable, Video cable, 2 AA batteries, Quick Start Guide, Basic Instruction Manual, Warranty Card, CD-ROM with OLYMPUS Master Software, and Camera Advanced manual.

U.S. Pricing

SP-310 Estimated Street Price: $ 349 .99 (U.S.)

SP-350 Estimated Street Price: $ 399 .99 (U.S.)

For more information, review units, product specifications and high-resolution images of the SP-310/SP-350, contact Heather Snow, Mullen Public Relations, 978-468-8934 or heather.snow@mullen.com, or Chris Sluka, Senior Public Relations Manager, Olympus Imaging America Inc., Two Corporate Center Dr., P.O Box 9058 Melville, NY 11747-9058, ph: (631) 844-5000 (800) 622-6372, Fax: (631) 844-5262 or the Olympus Web Site: http://www.olympusamerica.com .

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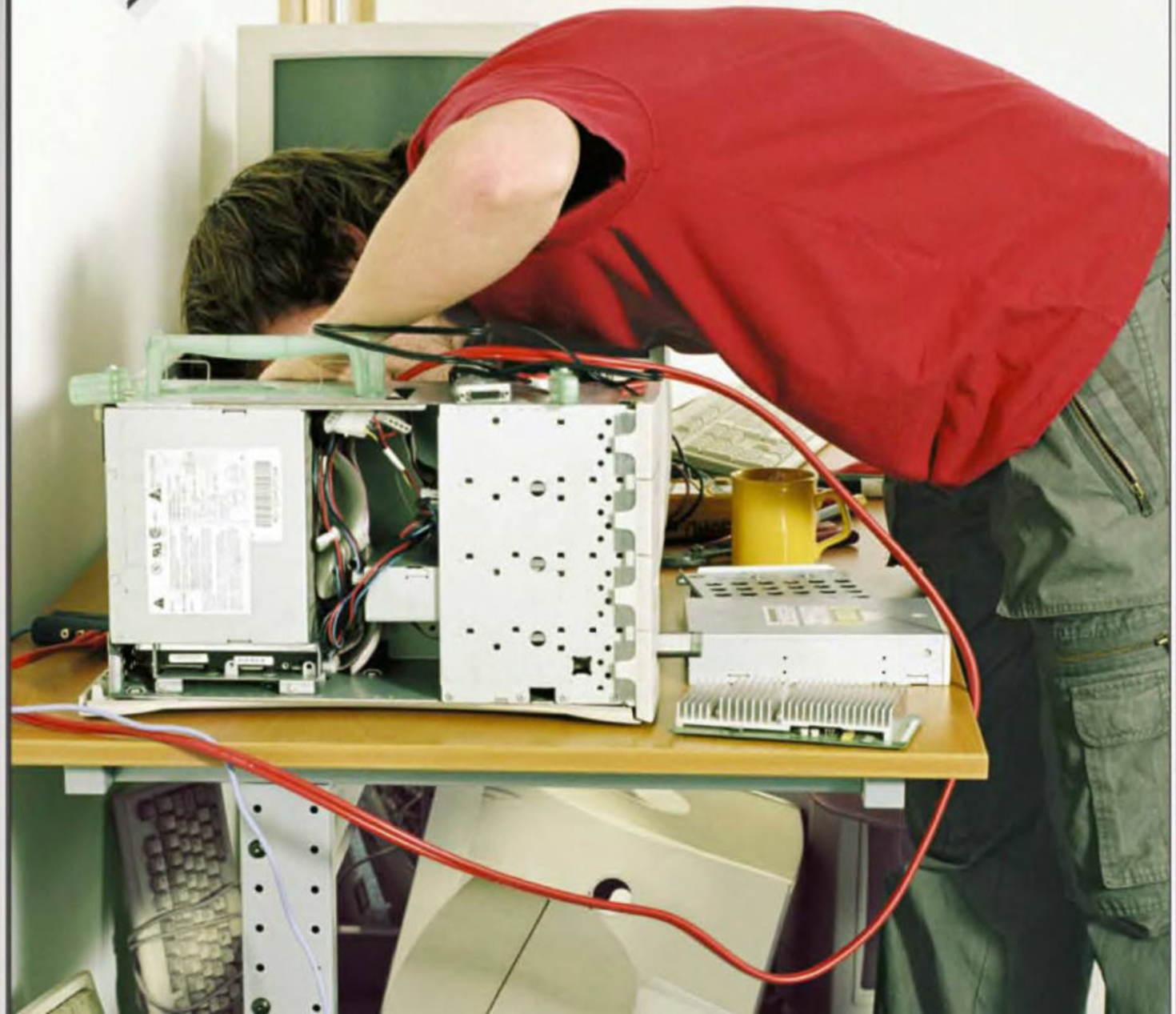

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MAIN FEATURES

An 8-megapixel digital SLR camera that produces high quality images.

OTHER INFO

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Canon EOS Digital Rebel XT Camera

Canon

This Canon digital camera is a keeper. Not only are the images astounding but the price of this camera is way below what we would expect to pay for a device with this power. The 8-megapixel capacity produces such defined images we found it hard to find a photo printer that would do this camera justice. With a myriad of different features we award the Canon EOS Rebel XT Digital SLR camera our Editor's Choice Award for performance, quality and price.

When you take an initial look at this digital camera you might make the mistake of assuming this is a 35mm camera. Its style, look and feel has the appearance that closely resembles that type of camera. But we guarantee you, it isn't. The EOS Digital Rebel XT is one of the few digital cameras that we would recommend to a professional photographer. Compatible with more than 50 EF, EX and EF-S lenses we're sure you'll be able to acquire the right image you need in any type of environment.

This Single Lens Reflex (SLR) camera has a PictBridge interface for easy transferal to a photo printer and uses a CompactFlash card for storage. We should warn you, if you plan on taking pictures in the high quality mode, you'll need the largest card available as the 3072x2048 maximum resolution image will eat up around 3MB of memory per picture. The automatic mode of the camera provides easy use for the novice but it also allows the professional to make manual adjustments according to their particular needs. The burst rate of the Canon EOS Digital Rebel XT is quite acceptable with an average 4 images per second for a maximum of 14 pictures.

The digital camera weighs around 1.6 pounds in addition to the weight of any add-on lens. Owners may find the 1.8-inch LCD review display a little on the small side and we notice a bit of washout when using the camera in direct sunlight. We should mention though, that a lot of cameras with LCD displays experience the same problem.

The Digital Rebel XT has 12 shooting modes including 6 PIC (programmed image control) settings for frequent shoots in the same environment. The camera also has another interesting feature, a Depth-Of-Field button allows you to preview the front-to-back sharpness before you actually take the picture.

We found it to be a pleasure to work with the Canon EOS Rebel XT Digital SLR camera and are more than happy with the picture quality it produces. With an internet price of $730, this 8-megapixel camera will find a home with many novice and professional photographers. Additional information and specifications can be found at **www.canon.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

The ZR 300 weighs less than a pound, includes a 22x optical zoom and has a ho
of transition effects.

OTHER INFO

An impressive auto-focus will leave you wondering if you should take it out of automatic or not.

PRICE $410

www.canon.com

BCM VERDICT

+ An inexpensive camcorder with excellent auto-focus and effects.

- You might hear some camera movement on the audio.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

Canon ZR 300 Camcorder

Canon

>From what we can tell, Canon has made a vast improvement with the ZR-300 digital camcorder over the ZR models last year. This model is a tight and compact unit that we found fairly easy to handle and operate. While it still has a few deficiencies it's price is right in line with the features of a digital video camera in this category.

The ZR 300 weighs less than a pound and we find it quite easy to operate with one hand. The zoom and operational buttons are user-friendly and easy to operate once you easily learn where they are. The camcorder includes a 22x optical zoom which had a nice flow to it and we liked how it slowed down when reaching the optimum zoom levels. The 2.4" TFT active matrix LCD viewer swings out from the side of the camera with a vivid display.

With some brands of digital video recorders we see that auto-focus isn't up to par with expectations, however the ZR 300 has an impressive automatic mode (and auto-focus) that will leave you wondering if you should take it out of automatic or not. There are preset modes built in to the camera for low light, spotlight, sand, snow, stitch-assist and night settings. We really like the Super night mode for shoots in an extremely low lux environment. You'll find a host of transition effects with the camera including beam, flip, corner or window wipe, zigzag and your standard fade effect.

The camera uses MiniDV media for video storage, so you do have a range of movie lengths available. While the device includes an 8MB SD memory card for still photography, you'll probably need more memory if you use it for this function. During our unit test the Lithium-Ion battery lasted around an hour and 15 minutes of shooting time and an AC adapter is boxed with the ZR 300. If you do a lot of off-and-on shooting though, you may want to consider carrying along a spare battery just in case.

The camera professes its High Definition 16:9 capabilities, which for the most part work well. We did notice however, that when we shot the same subject in a 4:3 environment (without changing zoom or other settings) that there was a slight variation between the two modes regarding the coverage area. Color representation was quite accurate in well-lit areas and as we expected some of the definition and color are lost when using the two night modes.

The average price of the Canon ZR-300 digital camcorder is around $450 at most of the popular chain stores, however we did find a few internet retailers that reduced that price by $40 or so. Canon's web site at **www.canon.com** has more information and specifications on this affordable video camera.

MAIN FEATURES

Kodak's 4.3-megapixel digital camera that includes a Schneider-Kreuznach C-Variogon 2.8X optical lens.

OTHER INFO

In the burst mode we were able take 6 shots in two seconds.

PRICE $250

www.kodak.com

Kodak EasyShare LS743

If you're in the market for a nice 4.3-megapixel digital camera for under $250, the Kodak EasyShare LS743 is a perfect match. Known for its reputation in camera devices and supplies for many decades, Kodak continues to offer quality products with this camera. Considering all the features and price of the LS743, we award it our Best Buy Award for value and features.

The first thing that impressed us about this camera was its ability to take quick multiple shots in burst mode. We were able take 6 shots in two seconds (our subject was street traffic) and each shot lacked any blurring effect. In addition, we were appreciative of the clarity and color of each print. Although our testing did show slight color variations in low light-no flash settings, the LS743 held color true in outdoor environments and when using a flash. The flash unit has an effective 10 foot coverage area while offering a red-eye reduction mode.

While we were quite satisfied with the auto focus feature it is quite easy to override the option with a manual mode.

Zoom features of the EasyShare LS743 include a Schneider-Kreuznach C-Variogon 2.8X optical lens and 3.6X advanced digital zoom to provide an effective 10x zoom ratio. The camera's 2408x1758 picture resolution in best mode was extremely crisp and defined. We found that this particular mode produced excellent 8x10 and 4x6 photo quality prints. The quality of your photo prints will hinge on the DPI rating of the printer you use.

The 1.8" high resolution LCD viewfinder accurately previewed the resultant image and unlike some cameras we've reviewed the viewfinder's image held up in outdoor conditions. The display can also be magnified up to four times the original size. Modes available with the LS743 include night & night portrait, sport, landscape, snow, beach, party, self portrait, video and a unique museum mode.

Although we really like the still photography that the camera offers, the high resolution (640x480) MPEG-4 video capture was a bit jumpy at 13 frames per second. Going with the lower 320x240 resolution at 20 frames per second was better, but some might miss a more effective 30fps output. The LS743 comes with 16MB of built in memory and accepts SD and MMC memory cards, the total video and still photo storage will depend on the amount of additional memory that you purchase.

The LS series of Kodak digital cameras are billed as ultra-compact and feature-rich, the EasyShare LS743 definitely fits that category. We find this camera to be an excellent choice and a great value for the amateur photographer who demands excellent picture quality. You can view the entire line of EasyShare cameras at **www.kodak.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Excellent lens and burst mode to produce great images.

- Better low light images would make this camera perfect.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

BEST BUY Business Computing 2005

MAIN FEATURES

An 8-megapixel camera with an effective 15x zoom that takes excellent images.

OTHER INFO

Color representation of this camera in lit or flashed settings was quite accurate.

PRICE : $550

www.olympusamerica.com

Olympus C8080 Camera

The Olympus C8080 Wide Zoom camera is a true piece of art. We've seen a lot of digital cameras come through our door but this particular unit not only takes superb images but has a great ergonomic fit to it as well. A lot of thought went into the production of this camera to appeal to the novice and the professional photographer as well. We award the Olympus C8080 our Editor's Choice Award for functionality and value.

The C8080 features a 5x-optical and 3x-digital zoom for an effective 15x zoom factor. The 8 megapixel capacity of the camera yields a maximum resolution of 3264x2448 in the super-high quality mode. It's quite likely that this camera will produce a higher resolution than most photo printers on the market can handle. We were extremely pleased with the results of the photo printers we tested as well as the prints we received from a photo lab using the camera's memory card. The unit is also capable of recording video with the length depending on the memory card you install. In both 640x480 and 320x240 resolution modes the frame rate is 15 FPS and is saved as a Quicktime movie.

Color representation of the Olympus C8080 Wide Zoom camera in lit or flashed settings was quite accurate while loosing some hue factors in lower light. Shutter speeds, whether manual, automatic or programmed can range between f2.4 and f8.0. In burst mode, we were able take around six shots in a five second test and we found the auto-focus feature was extremely fast and accurate in both indoor and outdoor environments. Start up time is extremely short with a maximum 2 second wait.

Several preset modes are available with the C8080 including portrait, landscape, night scene, sports and a customizable MyMode setting. The camera also offers images effects like black-and-white, sepia, color phase as well as sharpness and contrast effects. An interesting effect called Resize reduces the size of the image automatically for use with email or a web page. For both preview and replay, the 1.8" color TFT LCD viewfinder was extremely vivid and quite viewable even in outdoor settings.

The camera uses two different types of memory cards. One slot is for a CompactFlash Type I/II card and the other for the more xD type memory. For testing purposes we used a 512MB xD card and were able to fit around 20 TIFF formatted pictures on the card, although company literature states you can fit a little over a thousand images on the same card with the camera's 1600x1200 resolution setting.

With a perfect fit in your hands and quality picture taking, both novice and professional photographers will be pleased with the Olympus C8080 Wide Zoom camera. Internet pricing begins around $550 which is an extremely good deal for an 8 megapixel digital camera. Specs on the camera area available at **www.olympusamerica.co**

BCM VERDICT

+ Receive excellent images from this 8-megapixel camera.

- Only a greater zoom ratio would have made this camera better.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

The 4-megapixel camera with a 10x optical zoom that produces great 4x6 and 8x10's.

OTHER INFO

Has a maximum resolution of 640x480 for video and has a frame rate of either 15 or 30 frames per second.

PRICE

www.pentax.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Great price for 4-megapixel camera that produces great

− Has a slight learning curve for newbies in picture taking.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

Pentax Optio MX4

Most cameras on the market today take the side of being a video or photo device. While they usually have the functionality to do the job of the other, the Pentax Optio MX4 claims to be both devices in Pentax's marketing. The 4-megapixel camera uses a SD Memory Card for both photography and videos shoots and you'll likely want to upgrade the memory over the unit's 32MB card.

The MX4 has a maximum resolution of 640x480 for video and has a frame rate of either 15 or 30 frames per second. Video is saved to the memory card in the MPEG-4 format. Quality of the video with a higher frame rate was quite acceptable but the image quality for photos is even better. Our tests with 4"x6" and 8"x10" photographs had a reasonable color representation and we saw no pixilation of the picture.

Complete with a 10x optical zoom, ten scene modes and the look of a video camcorder, the Pentax Optio MX4 is a perfect choice for the family to carry around at picnics or vacations. Priced at $269 on the internet this 4-megapixel camera/camcorder is a pretty good value. For technical specifications and information, visit the company's web site at **www.pentax.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

Photographers will love with this 7.2 megapixel camera that uses Sony's Real Imaging Processor circuitry.

OTHER INFO

Also includes Carl Zeiss designed Vario Tessar 3x optical zoom lens.

PRICE $320

www.sonystyle.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Very competitive price for a 7.2-megapixel digital camera.

− A slightly larger LCD display would have made this camera perfect.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Sony CyberShot DSC-P200 Camera

Sony marks the fifth anniversary of its top selling CyberShot P-Series line with DSC-P200 camera. Photographers will be in love with this 7.2 megapixel camera that uses Sony's Real Imaging Processor circuitry. Designed for fast start up and quick shot-to-shot timing, Sony really meant it when their advertising claims that you'll "never miss a shot."

One of the most significant features of the new P200 is the Carl Zeiss designed Vario Tessar 3x optical zoom lens, one of the finest on the general consumer market today. Sony's (digital) 4.6x Smart Zoom yields an approximate 14x total zoom rate. The camera features a 2-inch LCD screen that allows the user to view the scene before or after the shot. In addition to making still images with ease, the camera is also designed to capture high resolution video. With this camera you can record MPEG video at the rate of thirty frames per second with a 640 x 480 pixel resolution and the length of the video depends on the available amount of memory.

The unit is targeted for the novice and professional market, specifically for those camera users who simply like to point and shoot. There is a mode dial that's located in the back of the camera where you can select between automatic or manual mode as well as a playback, program, scene and movie modes. Most interesting is the automatic mode that within seconds takes care of all settings except for macro, resolution and flash settings. This feature gives a typical user the ability to create images with very little effort. The scene mode has a host of typical settings used for different environments like landscape, twilight, candle, beach, snow, fireworks, high-speed shutter and an interesting "soft snap" setting. In each of these cases the shutter speed and exposure time have been optimized for the particular surrounding.

The results of our testing of the CyberShot DSC-P200 are mostly positive. The 7.2 megapixel resolution is astounding. If you like really defined images (although you'll have to shrink them for a web page presentation) this camera is for you. As far as printing the image, it is really going to depend on the printer you use, as the camera image will far outweigh the resolution of the printer. The camera wins hands down on 4"x6" prints and our 8"x10" prints were photo center quality. We hate to say it, but you may have to talk yourself into purchasing a higher resolution photo printer once you've used this camera.

Here's the best part about the camera, the price. We were able to find the Sony CyberShot DSC-P200 camera at several internet retailers for under $320. Considering the megapixel capacity of this camera for under $350 is a bargain. You can read the details and specifications at the company's web site at **www.sonystyle.com**.

Cameras

Sony DCR-HC90 MiniDV Handycam

MAIN FEATURES

Resolutions of the camera run between 2 megapixel for video and 3 megapixel photography.

OTHER INFO

Also includes Carl Zeiss designed Vario Tessar 3x optical zoom lens.

PRICE $900

www.sonystyle.com

BCM VERDICT

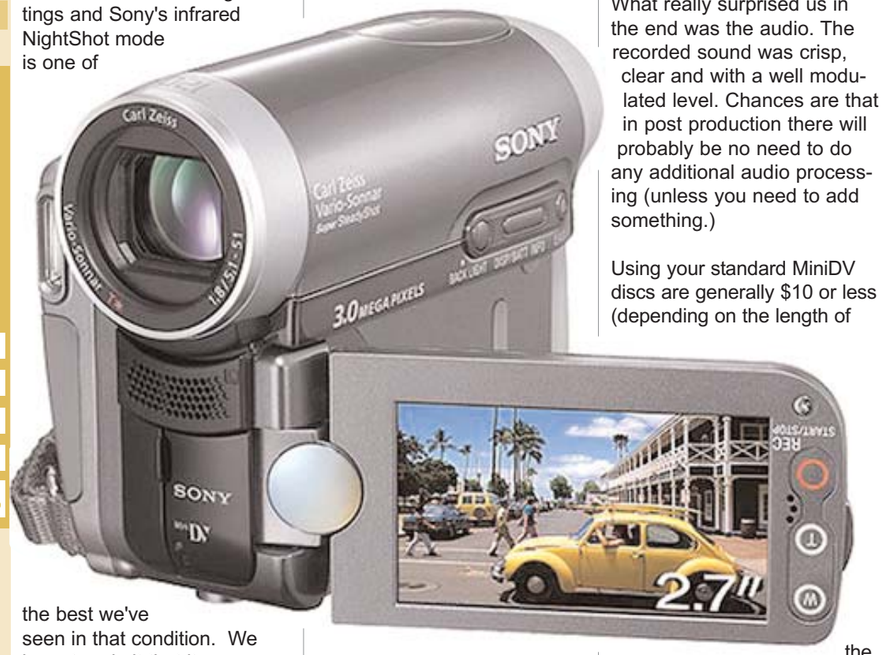
+ Very competitive price for a 7.2-megapixel digital camera.

- A slightly larger LCD display would have made this camera

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	
	95%

SONY

The Sony DCR-HC90 Handycam is one of Sony's latest video camera releases and from what we can tell works extremely well and captures vivid images even in low lighting. This fact is important because many of us use video cameras in low light settings and Sony's infrared NightShot mode is one of the best we've seen in that condition. We have to admit that it even does a better job outdoors and in full light settings.



Measuring a petite 4.5 inches long and 2.8 inches wide this Sony Handycam weighs slightly over a pound and the unit can fit nicely and neatly into any bag or coat pocket without the slightest hint of a bulge. Smaller cameras of this type are sometimes hard to operate but we found the DCR-HC90 was easy to control once we got the hang of it and you'll need the user guide nearby to learn the 2.7" LCD touch-screen interface.

The video camera features a 10x zoom that smoothly slid into a scene avoiding the herky-jerky zoom of some digital+optical zooms that we've experienced with some cameras. The Handycam has a selectable 4:3 screen mode as well as a 16:9 ratio which replayed quite nicely on a high definition television during our test. Clarity of the camera runs between an effective 2 megapixel resolution for video and 3 megapixel if you use the device for still photography. Color representation was well within the parameters we expect to find with a video camera in this price category although the low-light conditions does skew those readings somewhat.

Digital features of the camera include your typical slow motion effect and an interesting old-style movie effect.

While the auto-focus feature of the video camera was a bit lethargic, a dash of patience is needed in some instances when waiting for the camera to come to a settled focus. What really surprised us in the end was the audio. The recorded sound was crisp, clear and with a well modulated level. Chances are that in post production there will probably be no need to do any additional audio processing (unless you need to add something.)

Using your standard MiniDV discs are generally $10 or less (depending on the length of the disc) and the camera's battery was capable of using that entire recording time before needing a recharge, although we did power down the camera when we weren't using it.

The general price on the internet is around $1000 for the Sony DCR-HC90 Handycam although we did find a couple of retailers that cut that price by $100. For camera specifications and information visit Sony's web site at **www.sonystyle.com**.

Desktops

AOpen XC Cube MZ855-II

MAIN FEATURES

One of the smallest barebones computer systems available that's configurable and very inexpensive.

OTHER INFO

The MZ855-II is about the size of a shoebox and is available in an assortment of colors.

PRICE $300 (barebones)

xc.aopen.com.tw

BCM VERDICT

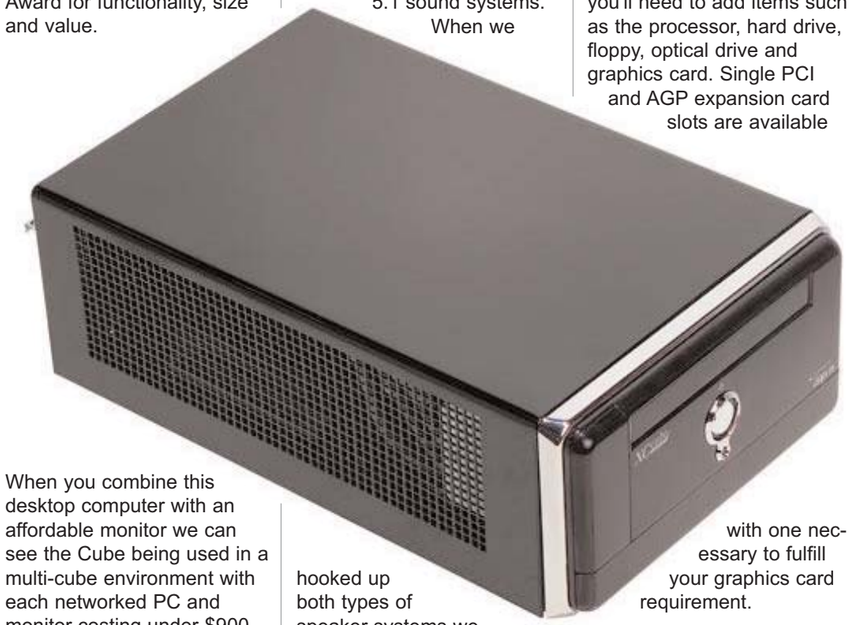
+ It may be small but it's a powerful little computer.

- Not much is known about the company or tech support.

EASE OF USE	100
VALUE FOR MONEY	100
SUPPORT	97%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	
	97%

AOpen

Remember the old saying when playing Charades, "Is it bigger than a breadbox?" In the case of the AOpen XC Cube MZ855-II, the answer is NO. It's amazing what AOpen can put in such a tiny box that measures 4.2"x12.6"x8". It may only weigh 6 pounds but is a giant in performance and wins our Best In Class Award for functionality, size and value.



When you combine this desktop computer with an affordable monitor we can see the Cube being used in a multi-cube environment with each networked PC and monitor costing under $900 per unit. In these days of high ROI expectations this combination is very feasible.

The MZ855-II we tested had a 1.6GHz Pentium M processor and 1GB of RAM installed, although you can upgrade the system to 2GB of DDR SDRAM. The SATA IDE hard drive interface will allow you to use a multitude of fast 7200-RPM SATA drives on the market today. The two 3.5" expansion bays allow you to house two hard drives or a hard drive/floppy combination. There's a slot for an AGP graphics card and depending on how serious you are about the display there are a number of choices that you can make.

Two standards of the computer include an integrated sound card with outputs for both stereo and Dolby Digital 5.1 sound systems. When we hooked up both types of speaker systems we were quite pleased with the clarity and volume that was produced. The MZ855-II has an Ethernet 10/100/1000BaseT interface (no Wi-Fi) for quick connection to your network. There are additional ports two USB high speed devices, headphone and microphone jacks, VGA output and a 4 or 6-pin FireWire interface.

We were worried that a computer system in such a small unit might cause some overheating problems. AOpen must have took that into consideration, although it does have a warm feeling to the case, there was no cause for alarm in that area. The fan was so quiet that you might not have noticed that there was one.

The MZ855-II comes as a barebones unit, which means you'll need to add items such as the processor, hard drive, floppy, optical drive and graphics card. Single PCI and AGP expansion card slots are available with one necessary to fulfill your graphics card requirement.

The AOpen XC Cube MZ855-II is about the size of a shoebox and is available in an assortment of colors. Doing some comparison shopping on the internet, we were able to locate the barebones unit in the $300 range which is quite competitive against other manufacturers. To receive more information or configure a system visit **xc.aopen.com.tw**.

Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

MAIN FEATURES

An attractive 20"-widescreen all-in-one monitor computer system with a fast G5 processor.

OTHER INFO

Includes 512MB of DDR SDRAM and a fast 250GB - 7200RPM SATA hard drive.

PRICE $2735

www.apple.com

Apple Power Mac G5 - M9749LL/A

We figure that Apple and PC owners will always competitively talk about who has the fastest computer. Each system has its own benefits in both software and processing speeds, as well as the applications used on both environments. The Apple Power Mac G5, with its dual 64-bit processor capacity, makes it one tough cookie to beat. Using several desktop publishing and image processing applications that are available for both brands, this Apple computer won the race hands down. We gladly award it our Editor's Choice Award for processing speed, price and functionality.

The unit comes with a stylish desktop appearance but it is what's inside the box that's even more impressive. The M9749LL/A model features two 2.7GHz PowerPC processors on a 1.35GHz bus. Although the base unit only includes 512MB of RAM, you can upgrade the computer to a maximum of 8GB, which is probably what you'll need for memory intensive programs like video processing and editing. A 250GB SATA drive (with a spindle rate of 7200RPM) functions quite well for data processing. The ATI Radeon 9650 graphics processor (with 256MB DDR SDRAM) provides a lightning fast video display offering 2 DVI outputs for dual-monitor applications. An optical drive is included with the system that will handle most CD and DVD formats with the exception of double-layer media.

There are three full-length PCI-Express slots, one 133MHz 64-bit slot and two 100MHz 64-bit slots for further expansion of the Apple Power Mac G5. Additional expansion is available with one FireWire 800 and two FireWire 400 interfaces and a total of 5 USB ports are included with the system. The base unit comes with an AirPort Express Wireless-G device and is capable of adding Bluetooth technology as an option. Additional networking is accomplished through a 10/100/1000-BaseT Ethernet connection.

The Power Mac G5 is chock-

full of interesting software titles besides the Mac OS X operating system. The programs include Dashboard, Safari, iChatAV, iTunes, iPhoto, iMovieHD, iDVD, GarageBand, Art Director Toolkit X, Microsoft Office 2004 test drive, Omni's Graffle and Outliner, QuickBooks New User Edition, Xcode Developer Tools and much more. Needless to say, the computer has functionality right out of the box.

The base unit does not include a monitor (or in this case monitors if you use the dual DVI output), so we do suggest that you select the monitor(s) that meet your specific application environment while matching the speed of the computer.

We found internet pricing around $2735 for the Apple Power Mac G5 (M9749LL/A) without options and a monitor. What a value for such a powerful processing computer. More information, technical specifications and upgrade options are available at www.apple.com.

BCM VERDICT

+ We love the power of the G5 and the widescreen monitor is fantastic.

- Has a hefty price tag to it.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

One of the fastest gaming machines we've had the opportunity to test drive.

OTHER INFO

Includes an AMD Athlon64 3000+ CPU, 1GB memory and an NVidia GeForce 6600 graphics card.

PRICE $715 (without monitor)

www.acer.com

Cyberpower Gamer Ultra 6000 SE

CYBERPOWER

We've seen many computer systems advertising that states, as a matter of fact, they are a gamer's machine. What we can tell you is that the Cyberpower Gamer Ultra 6000 SE is specifically built for a gamer, it looks like a gamer's machine and it acts like a gamer's machine. When you look at the components of the system, you'll see that the $715 price is a steal. This system wins our Best Buy Award for performance and value.

The first thing that appealed to us was the outside appearance. This slick looking machine has a see-through tower case with the inside illuminated. The front panel reminds us of a goalie's mask at a hockey game. The total overall appearance of the Ultra 6000 SE is very 'rad', lacking anything else to call it. What's inside the box is even more appealing.

The standard machine, without modifications includes an AMD Athlon64 3000+ CPU, 1GB of PC3200 DDR memory. To keep up with demand of speed, the system includes an NVidia GeForace 6600 PCI-Express video card with 256MB of memory installed. The lightening fast speed of the hard drives are supported by an integrated SATA RAID PCI-E controller connected to a 160GB-7200RPM Hitachi SATA drive with 8MB of cache. This lethal combination of parts provided us with one of the fastest graphics speed tests we've encountered and we experienced no hiccups or hang-ups with the several graphic intensive games we used. We should let you know that if you want to take advantage of the RAID capacities of the system you will need to purchase another identical SATA drive installed into the system.

The standard Ultra 6000 SE contains two optical discs, one is a 16x DVD ROM, while the other is an LG GWA-4161 DVD+/R(W) drive with dual layer support. Add in the built-in high definition 7.1 audio system, a Gigabyte Ethernet port and support for FireWire and high speed USB 2.0 devices and you have a very well rounded system.

If you visit the company's web site at www.cyberpower-system.com you'll be able to see the different configuration possibilities there are with the Cyberpower Gamer Ultra 6000 SE computer system as well as their radical, but appealing design. To sweeten this computer system, make sure you pick a monitor that has a fast refresh rate and a design that enhances the combination. With the list price of $715, you'll have the extra money to spend on a good monitor!

BCM VERDICT

+ One of the top gamer's machines we've come across.

- Not much is known about the company or tech support.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	90%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

BEST BUY Business Computing 2005

MAIN FEATURES

This slim notebook business-class computer has some serious computing power at a competitive price.

OTHER INFO

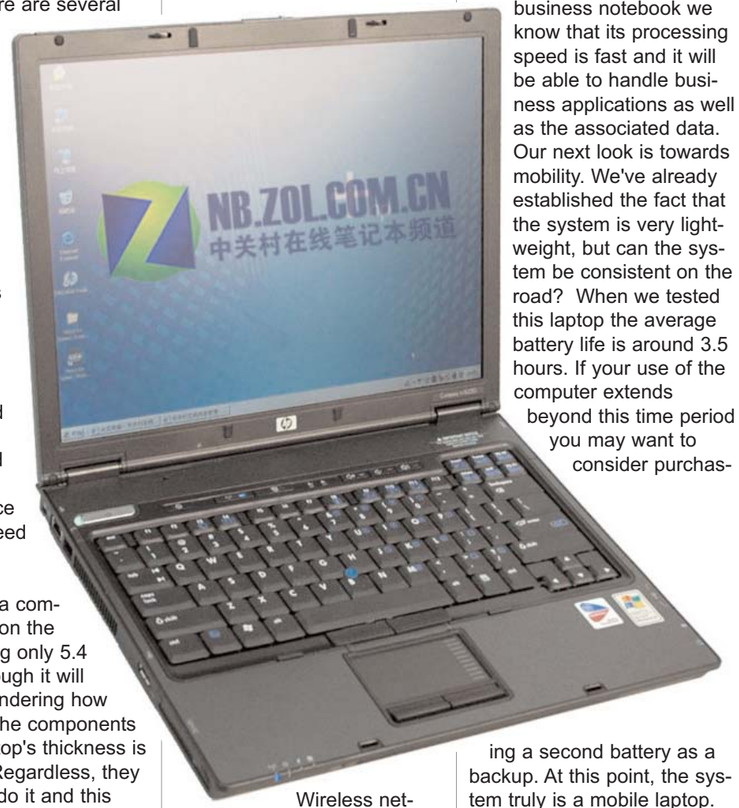
Contains an Intel 2.0GHz Pentium M processor, 512MB RAM, 80GB hard drive and ATI Mobility Radeon X300 graphics.

PRICE $1450

www.hp.com

HP Compaq nc6230

When it comes to purchasing a business and notebook computer there are several requirements to the design and functionality of the system. This includes the speed, storage capabilities and mobility. The HP Compaq nc6230 offers all these and then more. After testing this system we're pleased with the performance and give it our Editor's Choice Award for speed and value.



It certainly is a computer to take on the road, weighing only 5.4 pounds, although it will leave you wondering how they fit in all the components when the laptop's thickness is only 1-inch. Regardless, they were able to do it and this includes the 14.1-inch diagonal LCD TFT active matrix screen with a maximum resolution of 1400x1050!

The HP Compaq nc6230 houses an Intel 2.0GHz Pentium M processor, 512MB of DDR SDRAM (and it is upgradeable) and a 5400RPM - 80GB hard drive. An integrated ATI Mobility Radeon X300 graphics system (with 64MB RAM) nicely complements and controls the laptops LCD screen. This combination of processing and graphics scored nicely on our applications testing, proving that the combination is really effective as a business machine.

Wireless networking is available, as well as wired10/100/1000BaseT port, through a Broadcom Wireless-a/b/g integrated interface. Although there are three high speed USB ports, an SD memory card reader and an integrated smart-card reader, strangely missing from the system was any FireWire support. The nc6230 includes an optical DVD-ROM through a hot-swappable bay that prove useful in playing DVD media, however serious users may want to look into configuring the notebook with a DVD burner if they have such a requirement.

When we take a look at this business notebook we know that its processing speed is fast and it will be able to handle business applications as well as the associated data. Our next look is towards mobility. We've already established the fact that the system is very lightweight, but can the system be consistent on the road? When we tested this laptop the average battery life is around 3.5 hours. If your use of the computer extends beyond this time period you may want to consider purchasing a second battery as a backup. At this point, the system truly is a mobile laptop.

The HP Compaq nc6230 is competitively priced at $1450 for this particular configuration which is well within reason for a business computer with its capabilities and more information on this system and configuration possibilities are available at **www.hp.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ A very slim notebook that packs a punch for the business class.

- A better graphic interface would make this notebook perfect.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

MAIN FEATURES

The IBM Lenovo Thinkpad X41 Tablet PC is the first computer offered by the new group.

OTHER INFO

The unit includes an Intel 1.6GHz Pentium M 758 processor, 512MB RAM and a 40GB hard drive.

PRICE : $399

www.ibm.com

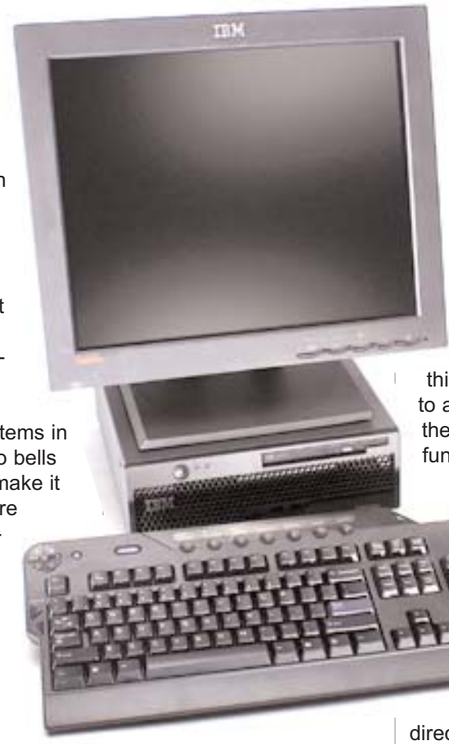
Lenovo IBM ThinkCentere A50 Series

It might take a little time to start calling an IBM computer, a Lenovo system, but in the last year the giant business machine company did sell its computer division to the Chinese manufacturer and they are continuing the effort of producing low-cost, yet highly effective computer systems that have the IBM look-and-feel to them. The Lenovo IBM ThinkCentere A50 series computer receives our Editor's Choice Award for functionality, low cost and value.

The first evaluation of this system tends to make us think that this system will likely be used in offices that require a low cost, yet functional computer used as a workstation. Like some of IBM's systems in the past, there's no bells and whistles that make it stand out like a sore thumb, but its consistency and workability will make it a workhorse in the office while providing a good value for the price.

There are several variations of the computer available in the A-series, with a base sticker price (without monitor) of $399. Large corporations and government offices that require a functional base system will find this price attractive while providing a functional PC at an employee's desk. Although the system is adjustable at the Lenovo web site, the base unit is quite powerful with the standard configuration.

This standard unit (model number 8085B1U) comes with an Intel 2.53GHz Celeron D processor, 256KB Level 2 cache, 128MB DDR SDRAM and a fast 40GB 7200RPM hard drive. Graphics are driven by an integrated Intel Extreme Graphics 2 card with a SoundMax Cadenza Sound Blaster compatible sound card. Wi-Fi capabilities will require additional devices, but the system does include an Intel PRO/100 Ethernet 10/100BaseT connection. It's no great surprise that this base unit doesn't include a DVD optical drive, but the 48x CD-ROM will be quite sufficient in a business setting.



The Lenovo A50 series unit includes standard equipment like a full-size keyboard, optical mouse and six (6) USB high speed ports for peripheral expansion. Lacking any specific productivity software the tower does include the Microsoft Window XP Home edition operating system that is automatically configured for use with the computer. Add a functional monitor to this system and you have to admit that it does offer the business consumer a functional computer system with IBM quality at a reasonably low price of $399.

The company's website, directly accessible for this unit at **www-131.ibm.com,** will allow you to order a Lenovo IBM ThinkCentere A50 computer with the configuration of your choice.

BCM VERDICT

+ A great workstation system with a great starting price.

- Have to go through IBM channels to purchase the computer.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	90%

MAIN FEATURES

A tough competitor for a Media PC with an Intel Pentium 4 - 3.4GHz processor and 1GB of RAM.

OTHER INFO

Also includes ATI PCI-Express Radeon X300 graphics and a fast SATA hard drive.

PRICE $1300

www.sonystyle.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Check this media center out. Great price and it's fast.

- A better sound card would make this system perfect.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

Sony VAIO VGC-RB38G Media Center PC

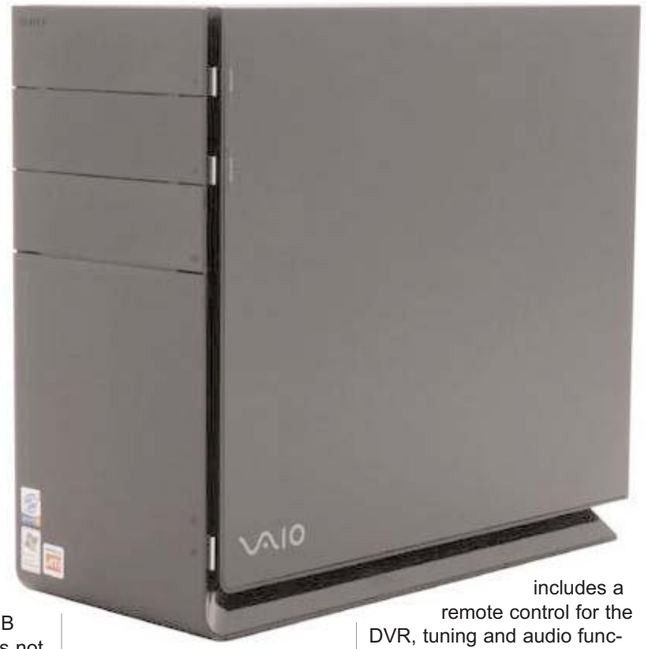
SONY

The number of Media Center-type of tower computers is increasing with the popularity of this type of system. Offering more than just a data munching and word processing, consumers are looking into these units, especially since they have tuner cards and DVR capabilities.

The Sony VAIO VGC-RB38G Media Center PC is another computer in Sony's VAIO line which we've come to respect quite a bit. The unit is driven by an Intel Pentium 4 550J - 3.4GHz processor with 1MB Level 2 cache and 1GB of DDR-SDRAM (expandable to 2GB.) Considering the cost and speed of this system we award it our Editor's Choice Award for price, design and functionality.

The graphics processor is an ATI PCI-Express Radeon X300 with 128MB RAM. The computer does not include a monitor in the price and it would behoove you to select a decent one with a low refresh rate. Our testing gave us some slick, flicker-free graphics in TV, DVD, DVR and computer game environments. You can import and export video through composite RCA jacks or with S-Video connections.

A 250GB - 7200RPM SATA hard drive comes with the system and includes two optical drives. Quite handy for media duplication, the DVD-ROM in the first bay and a DVD+/-R(W) double-layer capable drive in the second, the chore of copying was done in a single task. The hard drive and processor are fast enough to provide clear and concise DVR functionality to the computer while the



recording time will be limited to the amount of free space on the drive itself.

The VAIO VGC-RB38G is chock full of other goodies as well. Sony makes a statement by adding six USB high speed ports (two in the front, four in the back) to most desktops as well as a FireWire interface, the standard parallel and serial ports, a multifunctional memory card reader that supports most formats and your standard line-in, microphone and speaker out connections. An integrated sound card is included with the computer and is probably the one area we might have expected something a little better. You'll also find regulars like the speakers, mouse and keyboard with the system but it also includes a remote control for the DVR, tuning and audio functions. The operating system that's included with the computer is Microsoft's Windows XP Media Center Edition 2005.

Keeping in mind that you need to pick out a good monitor for the system, the Sony VAIO VGC-RB38G Media Center PC tower runs in the $1300 price range. We think that's a good value for the functionality and power this system possesses. You'll find the specifications and any upgrades at **www.sonystyle.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

The Sony VAIO VGC-V520G will do a great job of replacing your current TV system.

OTHER INFO

From a fast processor, amazing graphics and a large 20" LCD screen, it's a true media center machine.

PRICE $2550

www.sonystyle.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Get ready to dump your TV, this system is the wave of the future.

- The price of the system may be cost prohibitive to some folks.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Sony VAIO VGC-V520G

SONY

When you first look at the computer system, you immediately think you've bought a television and a 30-pound one at that. In reality it is more than a TV, its Sony's All-In-One media center. The Sony VAIO VGC-V520G is an interesting configuration of video, audio, and an extremely fast computer system. Like many of Sony's VAIO series, the system is configured to reach a niche market and in this case appeasing those with a flavor for gaming, video production/burning and audiophiles.

Equipped with a fast Intel 3.2 GHz Pentium 4 processor (with HT technology), 1GB DDR-SDRAM and 1MB Level 2 cache it is a fast computer. Graphics are complimented by a GeForce FX Go5700 graphics adapter with 128MB dedicated RAM that are displayed on a humongous 20" TFT active matrix LCD widescreen monitor. Our graphics tests revealed that this combination provided one of the fastest responses we've seen and can produce a frame rate that averaged around 85 frames per second. Gamers will LOVE this machine!

The VGC-V520G includes the Intel High Definition audio chip for great stereo sound. The speakers are okay, but lacking a sub-woofer. True audiophiles will seek out a more powerful audio system to really hear the advantages that the audio chip provides. Sony didn't cut any corners with the hard drive, providing it with fast 7200-RPM ATA-100 250GB drive storage. Although the optical drive is in a peculiar position it is capable of burning both CD and DVD media. Compatible with both DVD+ and DVD- formats it can also write double-layer DVD+R discs with a 2.4x write speed.

As the computer system itself is built into the casing of the monitor there is no computer case. A wireless mouse and keyboard make it easy to locate on a computer desk or if you prefer, a TV stand. A remote control unit (with great response) can be used for television viewing or to take advantage of the DVR functions that the computer offers.

Connection to your network is obtainable through a built-in Wireless-b/g interface or hardwired RJ-45 Ethernet 10/100BaseT port. You'll also find connections for audio out, a microphone, headphones, antenna/cable input, S-Video and composite out, FireWire and 4 high speed USB ports.

Full software versions of VAIO Zone, VAIO Media, Sonic's RecordNow!, Sony's DVgate Plus and SonicStage Mastering Studio, Adobe's Photoshop Album SE and Elements2.0, Microsoft Works 8.0 and InterVideo's WinDVD are included with the unit. We are scratching our head in regards to the operating system. We wonder why Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition is installed when Windows Media Center Edition is available.

Although the Sony VAIO VGC-V520G is a weighty unit it does a great job of replacing your current television system. With that in consideration and all the features of the unit, the $2550 internet price we found is in line with competitive computer systems on the market today. Sony's web site has more information on the computer at **www.sonystyle.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

A fantastic 19" LCD display that outperforms many of its competitors. We really like this monitor.

OTHER INFO

The DVI output and USB 2.0 hub sweetens the deal at a fantastic price.

PRICE $400

www.hp.com

HP L1940 19-Inch Flat Panel

First impressions are not always necessarily the truth. When we received this 19-inch HP flat panel monitor with a price under $500 for testing, we wondered what flaws we might find with it. Surprisingly, the only thing we wished the monitor would have included was audio output, but that is easily remedied with a sound card and speakers. For the money, this rather large monitor is a bargain and the HP L1940 19" flat panel monitor receives our Best Buy Award.

The HP L1940 has a molded plastic base that allows the user to rotate the display a full 360 degree range. This feature makes it quite easy for a user to turn the monitor around so someone in the office can view the display. The panel itself is 12"x15" and is adjustable to observe in either a portrait or landscape views. Unlike some flat panel monitors, this model has a very wide 178 degree viewing angle.

With a .294mm dot pitch and 25ms response rate, this flat panel monitor outperformed many of its competitors with like specifications. Our testing of the monitor resulted in almost perfect color representation. We couldn't pick out even one color that showed a variance to our expectations.

Brightness and contrast tests were uniform throughout the entire screen and we saw no instances of defective pixels. Screen refreshes were flawless and the autosync feature of the monitor worked like a charm. While in the monitor's native 1280x1024 resolution mode, text was extremely crisp and readable.

Video input is selectable between your standard 15-pin VGA connector or through a DVI-D cable. The display was impressive with digital input retrieved from both DVI computer video and DVD output. Our DVD test also displayed extremely accurate flesh tones. The monitor also has a built-in USB 2.0 hub that features one upstream and two downstream ports.

The Hewlett-Packard warranty covers the panel's parts and labor for three years with onsite repair and the company even offers a replacement monitor within two days if it fails completely. Additional toll-free 24/7 phone support is available during the warranty period.

We have had the chance to review other monitors in this size range with many of the same features, however the listed price of this flat panel quite phenomenal considering its performance. Using popular internet shopping services we found prices below $400 for new units and you might even find additional savings through a monitor trade-in program if it's still available. For more information and technical specifications, visit the company's web site at **www.hp.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ The price and performance of this monitor can't be beat!

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	99%

BEST BUY Business Computing 2005

MAIN FEATURES

A 17" LCD monitor with a great display, good color representation and a solid base.

OTHER INFO

The unit comes complete with cables for analog, DVI and audio.

PRICE $330

www.sharpsystems.com

Sharp LL-172G-B 17" Monitor

There are 100 reasons why someone would want to purchase a 17" flat screen monitor. But in most cases the simple reason is that you want one. The next step in the process involves the price and the value you receive in the purchase. The Sharp LL-172G is a monitor that professes stability and a good picture. Stylish in nature and functional for the professional, this model receives our Best In Class Award for functionality and price.

The LL-172G interfaces with either analog or digital inputs and an additional $39 cable will allow the unit to connect with two other computers for a multiple screen output. Although you may not initially need the cable we've seen some graphic designers who are very pleased with that capability. The unit comes complete with cables for analog, DVI and audio. There are 1-watt speakers housed on each side of the monitor and a headphone jack and case you need the privacy.

The Sharp LL-172G's native resolution is 1280x1024 which produces a very crisp and defined display at this setting. With a swift 16ms response time even gamers will be satisfied with the speed that this monitor offers. The TFT active matrix LCD screen was readable even in lit conditions and color representations were fairly accurate. When we used a DVD player with the monitor the scenes progress naturally even though we could tell the flesh tones were slightly off.

The monitor base is one of the sturdiest we've seen with two long feet and two shorter ones that we would dare anyone to try to tip it over. This particular monitor does not have the ability to go into the landscape mode however you can gracefully adjust the display by 45-degrees on each side. The LL-172G is very stylish with a grey metal-looking base that is combined with the display's black edging. Because the monitor is a flat screen it's perfect for office use taking up a minimal amount of space.

You'll receive a three year parts and labor warranty with this Sharp product and that includes 24/7 telephone support and the company's liberal RMA policy. Although a user's manual is not packaged with the monitor, you can go to the company's web site at **www.sharpsystems.com** and view one online. With an internet price that hovered around $330 we believe that you'll definitely see a value with the Sharp LL-172G.

BCM VERDICT

+ Great price for a 17" LCD monitor with an optional DVI input.

- Could have shipped with a better user's manual.

EASE OF USE	99%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

MAIN FEATURES

This laptop is a great business unit with great graphics and lots of storage.

OTHER INFO

The life of the 4800mAh lithium-ion battery is commendable, with around 4 hours of use

PRICE $1899

www.acer.com

Acer Travelmate 3200 Notebook

There are a lot of good things we can say about the Acer Travelmate 3200 series of computers. For the traveler or business person it's a great unit to take on the road. With just the right amount of processing speed, disk storage, mobility and price, this particular brand will be a welcome companion when you're away from home.

The base unit includes a 1.5GHz Intel Pentium M processor (upgradeable to 1.8GHz), 512MB DDR SDRAM (available up to 2GB) and a 100GB ATA hard drive. More than enough storage for business use, we were quite pleased with the performance of this system. The higher end models use Acer's modular bay on the right hand side of the laptop for a variable-speed CD/DVD optical drive that accommodates DVD+/-R(W) formats.

The 14.1" diagonal TFT matrix monitor provide a crisp and speedy display powered by the fast integrated ATI Mobility Radeon 9700 graphics adapter with 64MB DDR memory. Although it falls short of being a true gamer's notebook, we were impressed with the notebooks quick refresh rate and wouldn't be surprised if some folks use it for that reason.

The Acer Travelmate 3200 offers wireless support, great for finding hotel wireless hotspots, with built in Bluetooth technology and an integrated Intel PRO/Wireless 2200b/g interface. Hardwired networking will take advantage of the 10/100/1000BaseT port while the V.92 56K fax/modem will fill in when you're in a pinch. A fast-infrared (IFR) interface, two high speed USB ports and a Firewire 1394 connection give additional support to connect to other peripherals. There are additional outputs for VGA out, audio in/out, CardBus support and a 3-in-1 card reader for MMC, SD and memory stick media.

The life of the 4800mAh lithium-ion battery is commendable, although the company markets a longer rate, we were able to squeeze out around 4 hours of use before we had to recharge the unit. Software includes some Acer specific titles like e-Manager, Launch Manager, Disk-to-disk recovery as well as limited versions of PowerDVD, Norton's AntiVirus and NTI's CD-Maker. We would have like to have seen some sort of productivity software included, but that would likely raise the cost.

The Acer Travelmate 3200 series of computers weigh around five pounds and are an extremely thin light weight brand. Perfect for the traveling salesman or busy executive, you'll find a price that hovers around $1900 for this computer. More details and configurations are available at **www.acer.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ A great machine to take with you on the road.

- The price is just a little bit above average for the class of machine.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
SUPPORT	90%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	92%

Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

MAIN FEATURES

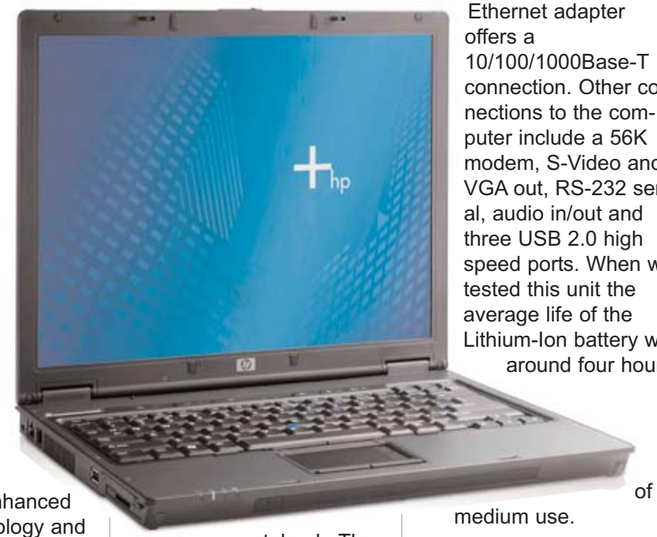
OTHER INFO

PRICE $1,912

www.hp.com

HP Compaq NC6230 Notebook

Our first thoughts about the HP Compaq NC6230 notebook were on how it reached that happy medium between a powerful gamer's machine and lightweight portable, yet it is also a productive business laptop. Built with great graphics, fast processing and a price under $2000 it earns our Editor's Choice Award for value, functionality and speed.



To start with, the system includes an Intel 2.0 GHz Pentium M 760 processor with Enhanced SpeedStep technology and 2MB of Level 2 cache RAM. Although it is equipped, out of the box, with 512MB DDR 2 SDRAM you can optionally upgrade to a maximum of 2GB. Some of the business-class machines that we've tested lately come with a 4200 RPM hard drive, however the NC6230 does have a faster 7200 RPM 80GB drive.

Weighing in at an ounce over five pounds and enclosed in a sleek black shell with a height of one inch, the computer is lightweight enough to be carried around traveling or being used as a desktop replacement. One thing that surprised us was how Hewlett-Packard changed the color scheme as we did not expect to see the unit enclosed in a black casing.

We also like the graphics of the HP Compaq NC6230 notebook. The system integrates an ATI Mobility Radeon X300 graphics adapter with 64MB of VRAM to power the 14.1" diagonal display. The display uses a TFT active matrix configuration and has a maximum resolution of 1400x1050. Some may like that resolution, but we found the 1280x1024 more appealing to the eye. Our testing of the graphics proved that computer was more than sufficient for laptops in the price category and will likely appeal to most gamers. The system uses both an eraser-type mouse (pointstick) and a touchpad for maneuverability with applications.

The system does have networking capabilities for either wireless or wired applications. A Broadcom Wireless-b/g interface is used for Wi-Fi operations while the integrated Ethernet adapter offers a 10/100/1000Base-T connection. Other connections to the computer include a 56K modem, S-Video and VGA out, RS-232 serial, audio in/out and three USB 2.0 high speed ports. When we tested this unit the average life of the Lithium-Ion battery was around four hours of medium use.

Shipped with Microsoft Windows XP Professional and several software applications that depend on the model you choose. The HP Compaq NC6230 notebook does include a 3-year limited warranty and HP's 24/7 telephone support. While we didn't find much variance in price, internet retailers offer the computer for as low as $1912. For more information and configuration possibilities visit the manufacturer's web site at **www.hp.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+

-

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	96%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

A fast an powerful notebook with 17" diagonal display and a fast Intel Pentium 4 3.6GHz processor.

OTHER INFO

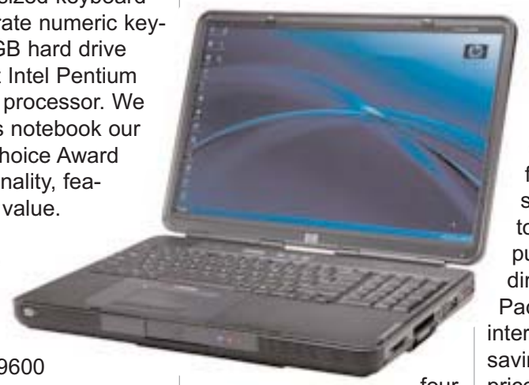
A full-sized keyboard and a 100GB hard drive make this a serious computer.

PRICE $2,000

www.hp.com

HP Compaq NX9600 Notebook

In this day of ultra light-weight notebooks, HP Compaq took another route to offer a desktop replacement computer with the NX9600 laptop. Sporting a large 17" TFT active matrix diagonal display, the unit weighs a little over 9 pounds. The larger size does have benefits like a full-sized keyboard and separate numeric key-pad, 100GB hard drive and a fast Intel Pentium 4 3.6GHz processor. We award this notebook our Editor's Choice Award for functionality, features and value.



There are several other benefits of the NX9600 that might sway you away from the weight issue. A large 100GB hard drive, hardly seen on many laptops, makes it perfect for data storage and file manipulation. With a maximum screen resolution of 1680x1050, the graphics are driven by an ATI Mobility Radeon X600 graphics chip with 128MB RAM. Our analysis of this combination places the NX9600 in one of the highest 3D testing categories for notebooks we've had a chance to review.

The laptop incorporates a 10/100/1000-BaseT Ethernet port or you can use the built-in Wireless-b/g interface to connect to your network. The system does include a 56K fax/modem when taking the computer on the road. Other ports integrated in the NX9600 are for FireWire, VGA and S-VHS output, docking/port replication, speaker and line out, microphone in and four USB connections. You'll find the 6-in-1 memory card reader quite handy while the notebook also has a new ExpressCard slot and a Secure Digital card reader.

The full-sized keyboard, which likely adds to the weight issue, has the feel of a desktop keyboard with an excellent keybounce response. The unit includes a separate numeric keypad for quick 10-key functions. Our test system contained the option of an integrated DVD+/-RW optical drive that can reach maximum 24x CD and 8x DVD speeds. HP Compaq installs the Windows XP Professional operating system and software titles like Sonic's RecordNow! and InterVideo's WinDVD. Unfortunately you'll need to provide any office productivity software as there are none included with the computer.

There are other laptops that weigh a lot less than this system but the performance and data storage capacity make it a perfect replacement for slower and older desktops. While you can purchase the system directly from Hewlett-Packard for $2149, our internet shopping netted a savings of $150 off that price. The HP Compaq NX9600 includes a one year warranty that offers online and telephone technical support. You can find out more about the computer and review technical specifications by visiting the company's web site at **www.hp.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Fast processor, full-sized keyboard and great display make this one hard to beat.

- Only a larger hard drive would have given us a larger smile.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

An ultra-lightweight notebook that weighs 3 pounds and contains a 10.6"-diagonal screen.

OTHER INFO

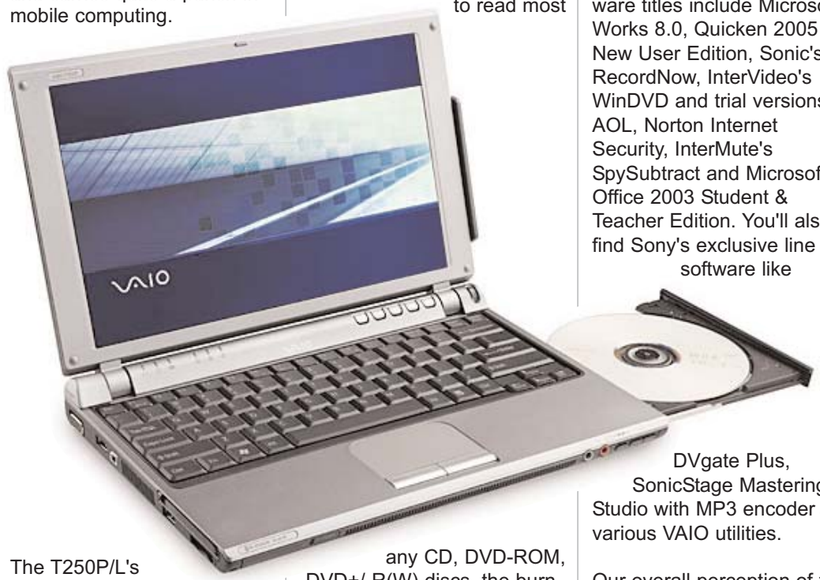
Also includes an Intel 1.2GHz Pentium M processor, 512MB RAM and a 60GB hard drive.

PRICE $1,894

www.sonystyle.com

Sony VAIO T250P/L Notebook

Beckoning from the days when computers were the size and weight of boat anchors, the Sony VAIO T250P/L notebook is a continuation of what Sony Corporation can do to make notebooks not only lighter, but also functional as a portable computer system. This ultra-lightweight system weighs only three pounds and carries quite a punch in mobile computing.



The T250P/L's dimensions are roughly the size of a standard sheet of paper with a height of 1.3-inches. This is pretty remarkable considering that it contains a 10.6" diagonal TFT active matrix display with Sony's exclusive X-Brite technology, powered by the Intel 855GME graphics chipset. The maximum resolution of the display is 1280x768 and when we tested it in this mode, text and graphics were quite up to par.

The notebook uses an Intel 1.2GHz Pentium M 753 processor and comes with 512MB DDR SDRAM installed (1GB is optional). Although we would have liked to have seen a faster hard drive, the 60GB 4200RPM drive is quite functional for a notebook in this size and price category. The integrated optical drive is perfect for watching or burning your favorite CDs or DVDs. Able to read most any CD, DVD-ROM, DVD+/-R(W) discs, the burner capabilities are limited to 2x DVD-R(W) and 2.4x DVD+R(W) media.

The Sony VAIO T250P/L notebook is a perfect business machine. With the integrated Intel PRO/Wireless 2200BG Wireless-b/g environment it's a perfect machine to connect to hotel hotspots or remote office networks. The 10/100Base-T interface is available for conditions that require a wired network capability. The laptop also offers wireless connection through a built-in Bluetooth interface and peripheral connectivity through two USB 2.0 high speed and FireWire (1394a) ports.

We think you'll also be impressed with the software included with the system. In addition to the Microsoft Windows XP Home Edition operating system, other software titles include Microsoft Works 8.0, Quicken 2005 New User Edition, Sonic's RecordNow, InterVideo's WinDVD and trial versions of AOL, Norton Internet Security, InterMute's SpySubtract and Microsoft Office 2003 Student & Teacher Edition. You'll also find Sony's exclusive line of software like DVgate Plus, SonicStage Mastering Studio with MP3 encoder and various VAIO utilities.

Our overall perception of the Sony VAIO T250P/L notebook is that it's perfect machine for the person that needs computer mobility. It's not a power user's computer but it's functionality on the road is quite sufficient. Sony's direct price is $1999, however we were able to find internet pricing as low as $1894 using popular pricing engines. The company's web site at **www.sonystyle.com** contains more information on this intriguing notebook.

BCM VERDICT

+ A very light-weight notebook that's great on road.

- Price might be a bit too steep for a 1.2GHz notebook.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	96%

MAIN FEATURES

The Motorola i605 cell phone is a perfect match to take advantage of Nextel features.

OTHER INFO

With its bar-style appearance the i605 sports a large 176x220 TFT LCD display and Bluetooth technology.

PRICE $300

www.motorola.com

BCM VERDICT

+ An excellent phone that takes advantage of Nextel features.

- We hope the company's merger still offers the Nextel features.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

Motorola i605 Cell Phone

MOTOROLA

With Sprint and Nextel having completed their merger it will be a while before the carrier completely integrates their systems. With that in mind, the Motorola i605 cell phone is a perfect match to take advantage of Nextel features. While you still have the Nextel walkie-talkie functionality this new phone takes advantage of Bluetooth technology. With its bar-style appearance the i605 sports a large 176x220 TFT LCD display. We were surprised that the screen kept its appearance even an high sunlight outdoor conditions.

Although some might consider it to be a bit on the weighty side, at 6-ounces, we figure that this is because the cell phone adheres to a very strict Military 810F specification, which means it can withstand all kinds of shock and abuse. With this in mind the i605 is the perfect cell phone for outdoors use. The Bluetooth interface can be used with the included wireless headphone and standalone Bluetooth photo printers like the Brother mPrint MW-140BT.

Although Motorola literature states the battery life is around ten days, we lasted a little more than eight days of moderate use before recharge was necessary. The retail price of the phone without service is around $300, however we were able to find plans with a purchase price in the $100 range. All things considered we were quite pleased with the performance and durability of the Motorola i605. Specification of this cell phone model is available at **www.motorola.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

This Motorola cell phone includes Bluetooth and internet access through the Cingular Edge network.

OTHER INFO

Maximum photo resolution is 640x480. You can record up to 15 seconds of video

PRICE $270 without plan

www.motorola.com

BCM VERDICT

+ If you want a phone that uses the Edge network, check this one out.

- Longer contracts with a lower phone price could have sweetened the deal.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

Motorola V551 Cell Phone

MOTOROLA

We've become a very mobile society and this is most evident in the last ten years when cell phones transformed from the heavy unit carried in a bag to the flip-phone that conveniently slips into your pocket. From the one phone per family concept to the cell family plans that give 6-year old Jimmy to 88-year old grandma the ability to keep in touch anywhere there's a cell tower.

What we are beginning to see now in cell phone changes are the additional features that are included with cell phone offerings. Not only the plans and coverage areas are changing, but the hardware as well. The Motorola V551 cell phone offers new features that keep the telecommunications company in the forefront. Impressed with the phone's capabilities, we give it our Editor's Choice Award for functionality, ingenuity and affordability.

One of the newest features to be included with cell phones is Bluetooth technology. We recently had the chance to use this phone with the Brother mPrint mobile printer. We took a picture with the camera in the 640x480 resolution mode, transferred it to the printer and the credit card-sized picture had the clarity we didn't expect. And did we mentioned that we did this outdoors without the need for any power sources?

We're sure that other cell companies will find the V551 compatible in their system, but it seems that this particular Motorola phone is geared for use with the Cingular wireless network. Using the Cingular EDGE network, the phone offers quick 3G connectivity to the internet which close to offering DSL on a cell phone. Three menu selections are Cingular-based applications. MEdia Net allows you to surf-the-net with the phone's internal browser. MEdia Mall takes you to the Cingular site where you can purchase programming and features for the phone without calling customer service. My Account connects you to Cingular's site where you can look at your account statistics and billing information. Additional features include a jack for a headphone/microphone combination and you can use the speaker/microphone combination for hands-free conversations and dialing.

The internal camera of the V551 takes photo and video images, with photo resolutions that range between 160x120 and 640x480. You can record up to 15 seconds of video with a maximum resolution of 176x144. You may not be happy with the camera images sent to high resolution photo printers, but they're certainly quite acceptable for sharing and posting on the internet.

We hope that you can find a Cingular plan that includes a free phone as part of the signup package but if you do need to buy the phone up front the cost of the Motorola V551 cell phone is approximately $270. Talk to your local Cingular sales office for more information or visit the company's web site at **www.motorola.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

A true combination of wireless communication and the productivity of the PDA.

OTHER INFO

The 1,800 mAh Lithium-Ion provided us with 2 days of average activity before the recharge was needed.

PRICE $500

www.handspring.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Great functionality as a phone and a PDA, too.

- Nice display but somewhat hard to see in direct sun-

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

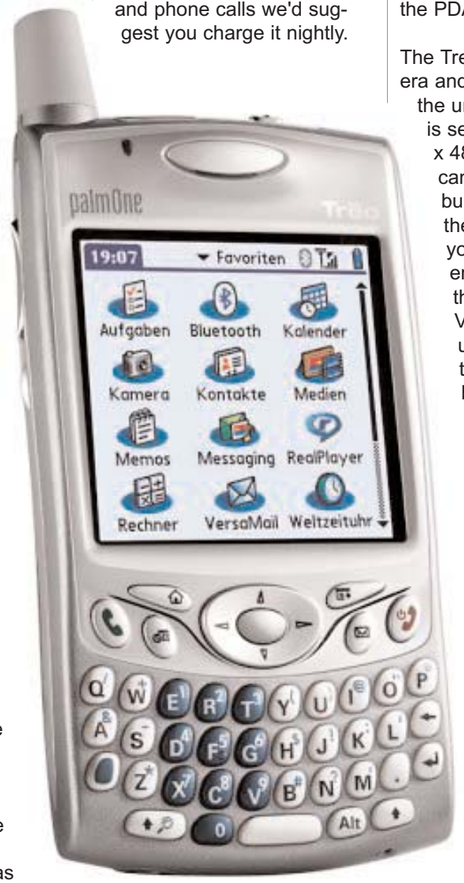
Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

PalmOne Treo 650 Smartphone

If you would have told someone in the 1940's that we would have business-class PDA telephones one day, you'd likely been locked up in the attic. Many of us have already been introduced to one version or another of Palm products, if not owning one at some time. The PalmOne Treo 650 Smartphone is one of the hottest PalmOne products on the market today and there's a good reason for it.

The Treo 650 is both a PDA and a cell phone. Its access to Sprint's CMDA network with the support of PCS Vision provide fast high speed data throughput. Although there are locked versions for both Cingular and AT&T Wireless, we were quite happy with the Sprint performance. In addition to telephony features the Treo 650 also offers a Bluetooth wireless interface. This unique combination of wireless communication and the productivity of the PDA earns our Best In Class Award.

Using an Intel XScale PXA270 312MHz processor, the unit has a little over 20MB of non-volatile RAM for data storage. A 320 x 320 pixel transflective display is extremely sharp although it slightly washes out in highly lit areas. The Treo 650 weighs 6.3 ounces and the 1,800 mAh Lithium-Ion provided us with 2 days of sporadic activity before the recharge was needed. If you want to keep the Smartphone online 24/7 to automatically check emails and phone calls we'd suggest you charge it nightly.



Although there's not much change in most of the productivity software the Treo 650 includes Version 4.1.4 of the Palm Desktop. Because this is a web-accessible PDA, the unit comes with the Blazer 4.0 web browser and VersaMail. Other applications include Handmark's Solitaire and Express (30 day trial), Tetris, eReader, and Zap!2016. As always, there are thousands of free, shareware and commercial applications on the internet you can download to the PDA.

The Treo 650 also has a camera and video recorder built in the unit. Picture resolution is selectable between 640 x 480 and 320 x 240, you can add audio through a built-in microphone on the PDA. Easily send your production through email or view them though a Pictures & Videos program on the unit. We would like you to keep in mind that because the memory is limited so you'll likely want to transfer them to your main computer.

PalmOne's Treo 650 Smartphone is an excellent device for the business person or individual on-the-go that doesn't want to lug around a laptop and finds that a wireless PDA/phone fills their needs. The going internet price of this device hovers around the $500 mark in addition to any monthly wireless access charges you'll incur. More information on this PalmOne product is available at **www.handspring.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

The Sony-Ericcson P910 is PDA, web-browser and tri-band GSM network compatible cell phone.

OTHER INFO

The screen display is fast, the colors vivid and we found it to be a perfect upgrade to the previous P900 model.

PRICE $500

www.sonyericsson.com

BCM VERDICT

+ A competitive cell phone, PDA and web browser.

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Sony Ericsson P910

Sony Ericsson

Dare we say it, not only is the Sony Ericsson P910 a great PDA/cell phone , but we find it to be a pleasure to play games on as well! The screen display is fast, the colors vivid and we found it to be a perfect upgrade to the previous P900 model.

There were two big changes between the models. The first was the vast improvement in the 3" diagonal touch-screen TFT display. Compared to the previous unit's 64K color/16-bit depth, the 910 vividly displays 262,000 colors with an 18-bit depth. The colors almost jump out at you and are quite visible even in lighted conditions. The second big improvement was the inclusion of a QWERTY-styled miniature flip keyboard. Although you can still use the touchscreen keyboard and handwriting recognition with a stylus, the keyboard is a nice touch and is very easy to use.

The phone's telephonic firmware and frequencies will depend on the country where the phone is used. The unit is a tri-band GSM and for North America will operate under firmware 910a (GSM 850, 1800 and 1900.) The phone service is not locked down, so you will need to check with service providers in your area for phone compatibility and service pricing. Connection with a notebook or desktop is accomplished through an infrared interface, Bluetooth wireless

While the P910 is great for mobile telecommunications, its performance as a PDA and camera are just as impressive. Using the Symbian OS 7.0 operating system, there are thousands of applications and games written in popular programming languages (like Visual Basic, Java and C++) that can be run on the system. Handango.com's web site is a perfect site for locating applications for the P910. The PDA/cell phone includes 64MB of internal memory and you can purchase Memory Stick cards up to 1GB for additional storage.

The Ericsson PC Suite synchronizes the phone with Microsoft Outlook and Lotus Notes while the unit's email client can connect to multiple POP3, IMAP4, and SMTP accounts. And optional product, the DSS-25 Desk Synchronization stand offers cradle synch operations. You'll find additional productivity software included like a planner, word processing, spreadsheet operations and more. For internet browsing, the P910 includes the mobile Opera web browser. Although it might take a little getting use to, it won't be long before you're surfing the net on the road.

We'd be reminisce if we didn't mention the P910's multimedia capabilities. The unit does an excellent job as an MP3 player, also supports MIDI, AAC, AMR, AU, iMelody, RMF and WAV files. As a camera, known as the CommuniCorder, the device supports up to 640x480 24-bit color resolution and 176x144 resolution recording video. In all cases, you can add audio to either item.

The general price for the Sony Ericsson P910 is around $500 and the additional cost of service depends on carrier you decide to team up with. Sony Ericsson's web site is located at **www.sonyericsson.com**

MAIN FEATURES

This multifunction device can be used as a scanner, printer, fax machine and copier.

OTHER INFO

The printer produced around 10PPM monochrome text and slightly slower with color.

PRICE $169

www.brother.com

Brother MFC-3420

Considered to be a jack-of-all-trades, this multi-function device is an interesting piece of office equipment that wears different hats. While no one feature is at the forefront of technology, this printer, scanner, copier and fax serves several different functions at a price that is quite affordable and competitive for any small to medium business office. The Brother MFC-3420 wins our Editor's Choice award for functionality and value.

If we had to pick out any one area that the MFC-3420 does quite well, it's probably the scanning functions. The 600 pixels-per-inch capability produced exceptionally good images with a color representation that exceeded scanners twice the price. While you can scan at lower resolutions, the Twain-complaint scanner was quick and worked with every program or word processor that offered a scanner interface input.

Many scanners on the market require you to individually place documents on the flatbed, the MFC-3420 has a 20-page automatic document feeder which makes the job of scanning multiple pages a breeze. We experienced no errors with the document placement or with ejection from the flatbed. We would have liked to have seen a higher document capacity, but for the price we are quite pleased. The one-touch copier feature duplicates documents in either color or monochrome and its performance in this area worked exceptionally well.

With options that let you reduce, enlarge and even sort documents in a certain fashion it will invariably make your copying tasks quite painless.

The Brother MFC-3420 includes a 14.4 Bps fax/modem which is used for the fax functions of the unit. Both monochrome and color faxes can be sent from this device, the only reduction in speed that we could see came from the receiver. Fax options include automatic redial, distinctive ring, speed dial and delayed faxing. The 8MB memory that is included with the product allows fax memory scans while doing double-duty as a printer buffer.

For printing purposes, this Brother product offers a maximum 1200x4800 DPI resolution. Our testing of this product produced a little over 10 pages per minute with monochrome text documents and just a tad slower with color text documents. On the other hand, it took over three minutes to produce a 4"x6" photo and double that for an 8"x10" photo.

As an office machine with multiple purposes, the Brother MFC-3420 meets and in several cases exceeds the applicable functions of devices that are more expensive. Considering all the options this device offers, the lowest internet price of $169 is quite a find. You'll find additional information on this product at **www.brother.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ A perfect all-purpose machine for the home or small business.

- Doesn't have enough resolution for printing large photos.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

The iP90 is a portable photo and text printer small enough to fit easily into a notebook carrying case.

OTHER INFO

The maximum DPI resolution for the photo printer is 4800x1200.

PRICE $200

www.canon.com

Canon Pixma iP90 Photo Printer

The Canon lineup of Pixma printers are an impressive lot. From the inexpensive iP1500 to the top of the line iP8500 they offer different printing solutions, speeds and portability. The iP90 is billed as a highly portable photo and text printer and small enough to fit easily into a notebook carrying case that has room for a printer. With its highly mobile status and excellent reproduction we give this unit our Best In Class Award for photo quality and value.

Connection to the iP90 is made through a high-speed USB 2.0 connection, infrared interface or you can purchase the optional Bluetooth interface for a wireless connection. Considering all of these options, you can print from any computer, cell phone or PDA. The PictBridge interface, located on the right hand side of the printer offers compatibility with a myriad of digital cameras on the market today.

The paper input tray folds out from the top of the printer while there is no output tray. Canon instructions do indicate that you should remove each printed page to avoid any jams. For a portable printer the Canon Pixma iP90 is quite fast. Canon materials state the unit should produce 16 PPM monochrome and 12 PPM color, however our testing resulted in slower rates around 12 PPM and 9 PPM of text respectively. The maximum DPI resolution for the photo printer is 4800x1200 and while in this mode we printed several digital photographs with speeds that averaged around two minutes for a 4"x6" print and four minutes for an 8"x10" glossy. Photo output was fantastic with excellent skin tones and color representation. Comparatively, the photo output matches the quality of other portable printers that cost at least $100 more than this unit.

The cost per page is quite reasonable, less than four cents for black ($6/cartridge) and fourteen cents for color ($11.50/cartridge.) Average life for both cartridges will vary, but our testing garnered around 150 pages of combined text and graphics per cartridge. The iP90 is packed with a CD-ROM that houses an online manual, an easy to understand setup program, drivers, PC programs like Easy-WebPrint and Photo Record while Easy-PhotoPrint is strictly for Macintosh computers. The printer does include an AC adapter and an optional battery and charger (around $100) should provide around 400 pages before a recharge is necessary.

The Canon eStore sells the printer for $250, while we found a $200 price using internet shopping services like Bizrate and NexTag. The mobility of the iP90, its excellent photo output and low cost per page offers a reasonable and affordable solution to portable printing. You can check out this model and the complete line of Pixma printers at **www.canon.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ If you need a portable printer on the road, check this one out.

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	90%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	98%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

MAIN FEATURES

A Wireless-g/b interface, 10/100BaseT and USB ports offer great connectivity.

OTHER INFO

12 pages of text per minute while it can spit out photos in just a few minutes.

PRICE $200

www.hp.com

HP Deskjet 6840 Inkjet Printer

One of things we first noticed about the Hewlett-Packard 6840 was there were more ways to connect to this inkjet printer than you can shake a stick at. The quality of the print text and the photo prints exceeded our expectations while the speed of the printing was average in contrast to comparative printers. All considered, including the stand-alone networking capabilities, we award this printer our Best Buy Award.

Network connectivity is what really shines with this printer. The 6840 has a built-in 802.11b/g wireless interface and 10-Base-T Ethernet port, making it a snap to join your local area network. The printer also includes a USB 2.0 connection if you wish to use the unit with a stand-alone PC, while your camera can directly connect to the 6840 through the PictBridge interface. In our opinion, there are less than a handful of printers that offer this same type of selection in connection options.

tus, both are under $100. While speed is a consideration when purchasing an inkjet printer, we found the HP 6840 produced an average of 12 pages of moderately busy text with exceptionally readable 5 to 36-point Arial fonts. As usual, photo printing does take longer with a 4"x6" averaging around two minutes and an 8"x10" around three. Many times however, this test is very subjective and depends on the subject matter, number of colors and DPI rating of the final print. The maximum resolution of the printer is rated at 4800x1200.

While some of HP's inkjet printers should stay in the home or in a low usage office, the 6840 fits perfectly in an office environment. While some printers in the same price range will produce documents and photos faster, we found the quality of production to be quite acceptable. The ink was evenly distributed with hardly any bleeding. We may suggest, however, that you opt for better quality paper when using this printer as it will result in a much cleaner document.

The printer includes your normal HP drivers and a handy program called Image Zone. The program includes your standard image editing utilities like cropping, lightening or darkening, red-eye removal as well the ability to create flyers, calendars and even scrapbook pages. There are a few optional items you can purchase for the printer such as an additional paper tray or the duplexing apparatus.

This is a situation of a little give-and-take with this Hewlett-Packard printer. What you might miss in speed, you make up for in network connectivity. The price is a definite factor in any final decision and with the under $200 price-tag, we definitely feel that the price reflects both the benefits of what the HP-6840 inkjet offers. You can find out more about the printer at Hewlett-Packard's web site at **www.hp.com**

BCM VERDICT

+ If you need an inexpensive networkable inkjet, check this one

- A bit slower than some networked inkjets we've looked at.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

BEST BUY Business Computing 2005

MAIN FEATURES

A multi-function inkjet printer, scanner and copier. An affordable solution to common office functions.

OTHER INFO

The printer's resolution is 4800x1200 DPI monochrome and 2400x1200 DPI color.

PRICE $120

www.lexmak.com

Lexmark P-4350

In the last ten years Lexmark has been known for their line of inexpensive inkjet printers, especially affordable for those on a tight budget. It came as no surprise to us that the company would produce an affordable multi-function inkjet printer, scanner and copier. The Lexmark P-4350 is a perfect match for any small to medium size business that requires a piece of equipment that wears many hats in the office. In addition to the unit's low price the cost of supplies is also quite reasonable.

The resolution that this inkjet printer provides is a surprising 4800x1200 DPI monochrome and 2400x1200 DPI color. Lexmark literature states the printer is capable of producing 22 PPM monochrome text, however the best we could muster was around 10. Color text test pages took twice as long and 4"x6" color photos were produced at a rate of one every 2 minutes in a high resolution node.

The ability to interface with digital cameras is commendable. The P-4350 will connect with any PictBridge compatible camera and it will import images from a multitude of different digital memory cards, this includes Memory Stick, Memory Stick Pro, Memory Stick Duo, CompactFlash I/II, Microdrive, xD, SmartMedia and Secure Digital brands. This is one of the few multi-function office devices we've seen that can handle such a large array of compatibility with camera equipment.

The time it takes to copy documents on the P-4350 depends on the rate of scanning and printing combined with the overall production period based on the resolution selected for both functions. Lower resolution, which is fine for some documents, will result in a faster rate of production. Although this unit is not a speed demon when it comes to scanning, it does a good job for a multi-function device in this price range. Our overall rate of scanning was approximately three and half pages per minute with color and higher resolution scans taking the most the most time.

The Lexmark P-4350 connects to your computer by way of a USB port. Drivers are included with the device and we found it quite easy to install while being instantly recognized by our Window's system. This Lexmark product also includes the company's photo editor software and the Abbyy FineReader Sprint 6.0 OCR program. If you are using this for OCR purposes you may want to consider upgrading the Abbyy software to a better version.

We think you'll find the P-4350 to be competitively priced, as we found it available on the internet for around $120. Although you might find a competitive device that produces any faster rate we think that this unit is an exceptionally good value. For more information on this product visit the company's web site at **www.lexmark.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ A great multi-function unit that's perfect for the home or small office. Great price, too!

- Printing might be a bit slow to some folk's liking.

EASE OF USE	90%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

MAIN FEATURES

The CanoScan 8400F is geared to scan transparencies and 35-mm media.

OTHER INFO

Includes film guides for use with 35mm negative, 35mm slides and 120 roll film strips.

PRICE $120

www.canon.com

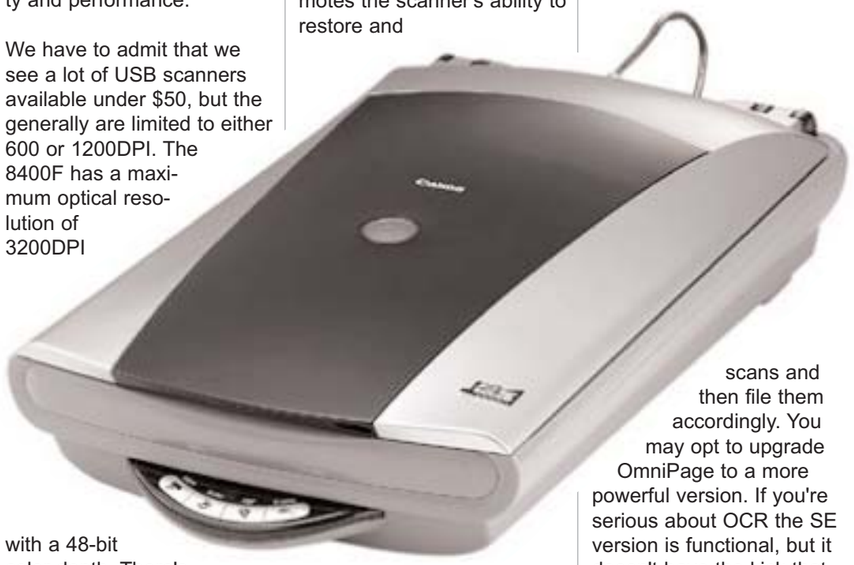
Canon CanoScan 8400F

Canon

You'll find many scanners on the market today that do a fine job of scanning documents, however Canon has found a niche market with the CanoScan 8400F scanner. While some of the high-end scanners offer a transparency or slide adapter as an option, this scanner includes the adapter and is aimed directly at that market. Our tests prove that it does an exceptionally good job of it and wins our Editor's Choice Award for functionality and performance.

We have to admit that we see a lot of USB scanners available under $50, but the generally are limited to either 600 or 1200DPI. The 8400F has a maximum optical resolution of 3200DPI with a 48-bit color depth. There's quite a notable difference between the two scanners when using the higher resolution scanner in both details and color. The CanoScan does an excellent job of scanning both 4x6 and 8x10 photographs, while it will be dependent on the photo printer used, our testing proved that scanned/printed photo was a realistic as the original.

The 8400F scanner includes a transparency adapter that includes film guides for use with 35mm negative, 35mm slides and 120 roll film strips. Just as we noticed with photo scanning, the higher resolution of this unit provides a much cleaner and detailed image than most scanners in the price range. Competing products with the same amount of functionality are generally $100 more as a minimum. Canon also promotes the scanner's ability to restore and revive color to old photographs or slides and our testing proved its ability to do exactly that (even though we might have to tweak it just a little afterwards.) The dust and scratch removal feature does a minimal job and has room for improvement.



Software included with the scanner includes drivers for both Windows and Mac environments. The CanoScan Toolbox works in conjunction with the buttons on the scanner. These one-touch buttons offer quick scan, copy (for printing), email, OCR and PDF document saving. You'll also find Adobe Photoshop Elements 2.0, ArcSoft's PhotoStudio, ScanSoft's OmniPage SE OCR and NewSoft's Presto! Page Manager. These programs give you the ability to edit, manipulate and alter scans and then file them accordingly. You may opt to upgrade OmniPage to a more powerful version. If you're serious about OCR the SE version is functional, but it doesn't have the kick that the upgrade offers.

It's amazing to think that you can find a scanner with this resolution for $120, but that's the price we found shopping on the internet. For specifications and more information, visit the company's web site at **www.canon.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Good price for a scanner that imports 35mm and 120 roll film.

- Just a tad slower than some of its competitors.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

A SCSI-compliant scanner that can perform batch mode scans with high efficiency.

OTHER INFO

You can opt for the optional transparency adapter which can scan up to 32-35mm slides.

PRICE $1,099

www.umax.com

UMAX PowerLook 2100XL

UMAX®

The UMAX PowerLook 2100XL is not your average computer scanner. Although the unit will perform above expectations in a home environment, this UMAX appliance has features that will be appreciated more in a professional environment. We've rarely seen a scanner that touts a solution for hospital and workflow applications, however the 2100XL presents unique functionality in those environments.

Unlike home scanners that implement a USB interface, this scanner connects to your PC through a SCSI compliant PCI controller that is included with the system. We presume that the consistently fast scan and data transfer is due to the SCSI connection and the internal design of the scanner engine. We averaged a little over 7 scans per minute feeding each sheet separately, but the performance using the scanner's batch mode was much faster at 11 scans per minute. The only item we'd put on our wish-list for this scanner is an automatic document feeder that would really exemplify the unit's batch mode.

When you examine the PowerLook 2100XL and see it in action, you'll notice how the unit uses internal mirrors and a 10,000 element tri-linear CCD array to accomplish a quiet and defined scan. The maximum optical resolution is 800x1600 DPI and the device can accomplish a maximum 9600x9600 DPI resolution through software. Most surprising to us during our testing was the color matching capability of the scanner. Only a few shades of blue and green were slightly different to the eye, we really admire the vibrant rendering of scanned images.

UMAX states that the 2100XL, with its large 11"x17" scanning area, is perfect for imaging x-rays. We put this particular application to the test with one of our medical friends. Based on her experience and expertise, she was quite pleased with the result and stated how the image truly represented the film without loss of definition. Customer service departments that used scanned images in their workflow will find the batch mode feature convenient to use. Graphic departments can opt for the optional transparency adapter (UTA-2100XL), which has the capacity to scan up to thirty-two 35mm slides.

The PowerLook 2100XL is bundled with two software packages. The first is UMAX's own MagicScan interface that does offer some adjustment functions prior to scanning. SilverFast, on the other hand, is a full-blown application produced by LaserSoft Imaging that contains a multitude of post-scan features. Cleverly named, the Densitometer does assist in checking and adjusting color densities of the image.

Shopping for the scanner on the internet resulted in a price that closely matched what UMAX was offering at their web site. The $1099 cost at **www.umax.com** was almost equal to prices listed through services like BizRate and NexTag. If you're in the search for an industrial strength SCSI scanner with unique medical and workflow solutions, the PowerLook 2100XL is definitely worth consideration.

BCM VERDICT

+ A great batch-mode (workflow) scanner with industrial strength.

- The price might scare some people, but it's a workhorse.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Best in Class BUSINESS COMPUTING 2005

Scanners

Sony VPL-CX85 Projector

MAIN FEATURES

An excellent projector with a 3000 lumen bulb, a contrast ratio of 350:1 and a max resolution of 1024x768.

OTHER INFO

The image can range anywhere between 40 to 300 inches in width.

PRICE $2799

www.sonystyle.com

BCM VERDICT

+ A perfect project for use in small offices or constricted areas.

- Consider the purchase of an amplifier if using in large rooms.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

When making a presentation with LCD projector, it usually means positioning it close to a computer system which can make the setup a little clumsy or obtrusive with a myriad of cords gathering around the unit. The Sony VPL-CX85 projector addresses that particular scenario by offering a wireless solution. Although there will be times when you still need to have a media device nearby, if you're able to play the media from a network drive you avoid the situation all together.

This lightweight projector weighs around 9-pounds and quite mobile. There are several input choices besides the wireless connection such as RCA composite, S-video and RGB component (with a 15 pin HD connector.) One USB high speed port provides instant access to memory sticks, portable hard drives or other storage devices with a USB connection. A one-watt mono amplifier and speaker provide sound through the unit, perfect for connecting a microphone or output from a sound card.

We are quite pleased with the LCD output of the VPL-CX85, with a 3000 lumen bulb, a contrast ratio of 350:1 and a maximum resolution of 1024x768, this Sony projector displayed an extremely crisp image even when the room contained moderate lighting. Our color comparison with a laptop was close in a dim setting, but noticeably accurate in a completely dark environment. Text, computer graphics and DVD video playback all passed with flying colors with a high level of definition. We saw very little image lagging that we often see in lower end models and the sound was loud enough for a hotel ballroom. If you plan on using the projector in a larger setting you may wish to consider some type of amplification system to appeal to a crowd.

One of the nicer aspects of the VPL-CX85, besides the image, is the remote control units that are included with the system. If one wasn't good enough, the second remote is more detailed and allows you to control adjustments like focus, zoom and tilt from the convenience of your office chair. Whether you use this projector in the office or an auditorium, the displayed image can range anywhere between 40 to 300 inches in width. With HDTV compatibility, you might even want to think about purchasing the device for use in your own home theatre.

Regardless of the application, we think you'll be happy with the results that the Sony VPL-CX85 wireless projector provides. Its additional convenience features add fuel to the fire. Although the list price is over $3000, we found several retailers on the internet that featured pricing around $2800. More information is always available from Sony's web site at **www.sonystyle.com**.

Security

Aventail EX-1500

MAIN FEATURES

The Aventail EX-1500 is a VPN appliance with unique and iron-clad remote protection techniques.

OTHER INFO

The appliance can remove all history, temporary data and downloaded files when the VPN session has concluded.

PRICE $9,500

www.aventail.com

BCM VERDICT

+ A VPN that leaves no traces behind when the session is done.

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	98%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	99%

There are many VPN (Virtual Private Network) appliances on the market today, while some of them are quite functional there's always the chance of a security breach by some highly sophisticated hacker. Most VPN products use the IPSec-compliant transport or tunnel methodology in their line of defense. We were so impressed by the Aventail EX-1500 with its unique and iron-clad remote protection techniques that we present it with our Best-In-Class Award.

Configuration of this 1U rack-mountable appliance was quite easy to accomplish using an easy-to-understand and highly maneuverable SSL browser-based program. With the EX-1500 you define realms and their effective zones which dictate particular policies, security measures and server access. Users are defined manually or by importing Windows' authenticated user lists. The company's Smart Access technology polls the remote user's system and decides which security scheme would be most effective and whether the client can access the system by browser or through a software-based agent application. This technology requires no interaction on the client's side making the process quite transparent.

The Aventail EX-1500 is powered by a 2.4GHz Intel Xeon processor, 1GB SDRAM, 36GB SCSI hard drive with an Adaptec 7902W Ultra320 controller and network connectivity is obtained by two 10/100/1000 Intel Ethernet ports. The company uses its own proprietary ASAP 8 operating system and supports most Radius, LDAP, SSL/TLS, Active Directory, HTTPS and TCP/UDP applications.

We really love the Cache Control feature of the EX-1500. Depending on the client's configuration policies, the appliance and client control can effectively remove all history, temporary data and downloaded files once the SSL VPN session has concluded. (Reminds us of Peter Graves and the old Mission Impossible television show.)

Our testing of this appliance was stupendous! We set up various systems with various levels of security and virus/firewall protection against the EX-1500 and had first-hand experience of the different levels of protection the system implemented. Even our Pocket PC (via Bluetooth) was able to access the system with its own particular precautionary measures. From what we can tell, this product does the best job of protecting itself and its corporate environment from undesired VPN entry, unscrupulous hackers and data transport theft.

The Aventail EX-1500 is more expensive than your usual IPsec VPN appliance, but its unique features are substantial in determining the price. The cost of this appliance can range between $9,500 for 25 concurrent users to an enterprise-level of 1000 (the unit's maximum limit) at $53,000. Conveniently, the EX-1500 will grant you at 10-percent license overage while you're in the process of securing additional licenses. We think you'll be wowed by this device and more information is available on the company's web site at **www.aventail.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

The Caymas 220 is a VPN appliance billed as the first Identity-Driven Access Gateway.

OTHER INFO

Runs in three stages: Who Is the User? Protect The System? Audit The User.

PRICE $9,995

www.caymas.com

Caymas 220

The Caymas 220 is not your run-of-the-mill SSL VPN gateway. In this particular case, Caymas markets the system as the first Identity-Driven Access Gateway. After a further look and test of the appliance we have to agree that it is quite unique. Reasonably priced for the number of users, easy to install, setup and administer we give the Caymas 220 our Editor's Choice Award for functionality and performance.

The Caymas 220 has two like products, the 318 and 525 which have a slight variance in LAN connections, power supply and LAN redundancy, USB port, management functions and the total number of concurrent users that can access the appliance. In all cases, however, the identity driven functionality remains the same.

You may be puzzled as to how the Identity-Driven Access process works. It's rather easy to explain and is, in reality, a four step process that the Caymas 220 uses. The first process is, as the company literature states, Who Is The User? In this particular case, each user that makes a request has (or will be given) a unique identity that will be stored in the system. Based on policy rules for new identities, certain access rights will be given. In both cases, previous and new identities advance to the next stage.

Once identified, the process takes you an authorization level where the identity is given access to certain areas of the network based on identity rights. The Protect stage monitors your usage and analyzes what the user does. If it detects any malicious or improper behavior, can block further sessions or limit user rights. The final Audit stage logs user activity on a per-session/per-user basis for further review by the Caymas 220 administrator. Identities can be imported from such services as LDAP, Active Directory, RADIUS, SecurID and manual user entry. The appliance protects resources like web and email servers, Citrix and Windows Terminal Services, Telnet, SSH and TCP/UCP client-server applications.

Our test of this appliance was mostly transparent from the remote user's standpoint, until we intentionally began setting access rights on the SSL VPN (virtual private network) based on our identity. The system easily picked up on a barrage of packets we attempted to send as an unknown user through the VPN. Activity logs accurately reported our movements through multiple sessions. The unit functioned extremely well and was easy to administer.

The Caymas 220 supports up to 100 concurrent users and there are no additional charges or per-user licensing. The flat rate price is listed at $9,995 and even though the company has a reseller program, we were unable to locate any on the internet. For more information or resellers near you visit the Caymas web site at **www.caymas.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ We like the way the system protects itself in three stages.

- Does take some time to configure to your liking.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

MAIN FEATURES

A USB device that performs a single-sign-on functions and security on your PC.

OTHER INFO

Our testing of this device resulted in a scan and interpretation in less than 2 seconds.

PRICE $99

www.zvetcobiometrics.com

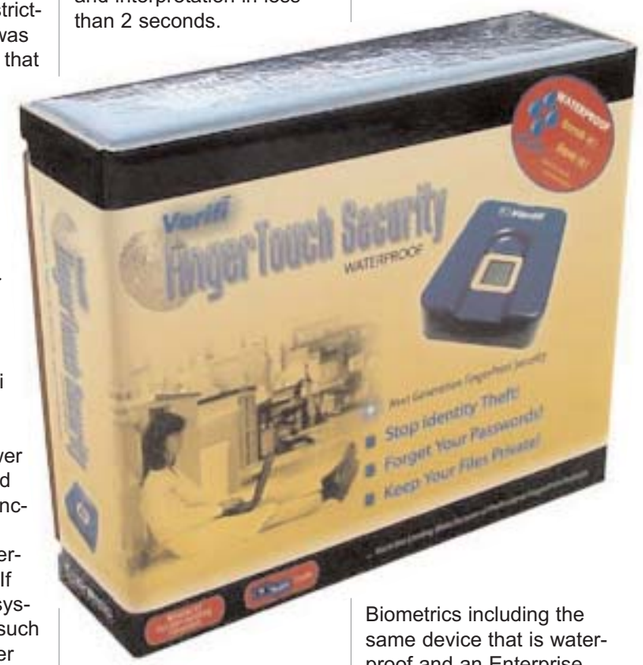
Zvetco Verifi FingerTouch Security Professional

It was quite a few years ago when we would watch a sci-fi or spy movie where the key character would use his fingerprint to gain access into the ultra-secure restricted area. The concept was good but chances were that the device didn't really work. When the technology was available, the cost was prohibitive to the general public. Today that's not the case and the same technology used on your personal computer has become quite affordable.

Zvetco Biometrics' Verifi FingerTouch Security Professional is a no-hands (just finger) answer to computer security and SSO (single-sign-on) functionality at a price that businesses and most personal users can afford. If your current computer system doesn't come with such technology then consider this product that wins our Best Buy Award for security and price.

The base unit is priced under $100 on the company's web site and this includes the finger-pod that is used for fingerprint identification. The P3400 is the fingerprint reader and is connected to your PC through one of your USB ports or a USB hub. If you do use a hub, make sure that it offers power to USB devices as the product will need it in order to operate.

According to Zvetco Biometrics there are approximately 9000 elements in the pod that are used to identify and class an individual's fingerprint. Our testing of this device resulted in a scan and interpretation in less than 2 seconds.



In addition to the P3400, the package includes Verifi ID Manager. This software will keep track of usernames, passwords, ID and PIN numbers used on your Windows programs and internet web sites. Simply set up the program or web site once and you'll never have to remember that combination of information again as Verifi FingerTouch Security Professional takes care of that for you. In addition to the program and security features, the system also allows selected files to be secure to only an approved fingerprint.

In addition to the basic system there are other packages offered by Zvetco Biometrics including the same device that is waterproof and an Enterprise Edition that uses Aladdin's eToken for additional security used in conjunction with Windows logons and authentication. All of these Verifi FingerTouch Security solutions are available on the company's web site at **www.zvetcobiometrics.com** beginning at $99 for the Professional version to $184 for the Enterprise version of the product line. We were able to find a few internet retailers that offer additional savings, however the amount was minimal.

BCM VERDICT

+ Perfect for adding more security on your computer system.

- Only faster fingerprint recognition would improve this product.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

BEST BUY Business Computing 2005

MAIN FEATURES

Communigate provides standard SMTP, POP and IMAP email server functions.

OTHER INFO

Communigate Pro 4.3 is a powerful email server that works in conjunction with multiple platforms.

PRICE $699

www.stalker.com

BCM VERDICT

+ A powerful email server that works in multiple platforms.

- Licensing arrangement recently changed in ire to previous users.

EASE OF USE	90%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	90%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	92%

Communigate Pro 4.3

While many businesses are very familiar with mail servers like Outlook Exchange and Lotus Notes, there's a new face in the game with a powerful email server that can cross several different platforms with most of the same functionality. Stalker's Communigate Pro 4.3 is a powerful email server and wins our Best In Class Award for functionality, ease of use and cross-platform compliance.

Although Stalker is a not a well-known company (yet), Communigate is available for versions of Linux, Windows, Netware, AS/400, OpenVMS, Mac OSX and several different varieties of Unix. The server is capable of handling a large user base that can range anywhere between 25 to 5-million clients. There are some slight variations of the product depending on the operating system, but the main goal of providing an email service for small to enterprise-sized businesses is met.

Our test of Communigate was performed on two platforms, Linux and Windows. In both cases the product was fairly easy to install and configure through a web browser-based interface, although we did need to have the instructions nearby to fully understand that process. Once the product was configured, the system was fully functional and provided us with the mail service we expected from both inside and outside the domain without error. As with any service or product, there are differences that you're going to immediately see. Communigate provides standard SMTP, POP and IMAP email server functions as well as groupware functions such as scheduling, invitations and task management.

Whether you use your web browser to retrieve mail, the server also provides interfaces that will continue to let you use your favorite email programs like Outlook, Eudora, Netscape and Incredimail while providing a coexistent relationship with an active Outlook Exchange Server. Communigate also provides its own security, anti-spam and anti-virus protection schemes while offering additional support through plug-ins from companies like Kaspersky Labs, Network Associates (formerly McAfee), Sophos, RAE Internet and Mailshell's SpamCatcher Engine.

Prices vary by the number of user licenses purchased, but start at $699 for 25 users and require you to call the company for any amount over 499 clients. We should also note that if you are going to use any plug-ins with the server, the licensing is not based on the number of users but the number emails. Upgrades are free for the first year after purchase and will cost you 1.5% of the list price per year after that time period. The company does provide unlimited email support and an online knowledge base with the purchase of the product. Optional premium phone support is also available from Stalker and is priced on several different tier levels.

A trial version of Communigate Pro 4.3 can be downloaded and additional information is available from the company's web site at **www.stalker.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

Produce online workflow systems with this product with a great reduction in development time.

OTHER INFO

Uses the company's own procedural language to complete comprehensive tasks.

PRICE $15,000

www.quask.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Once you get the hang of it, you'll produce workflow solutions in a fraction of the time.

- Has a big learning curve. Company support is great though!

EASE OF USE	85%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	93%

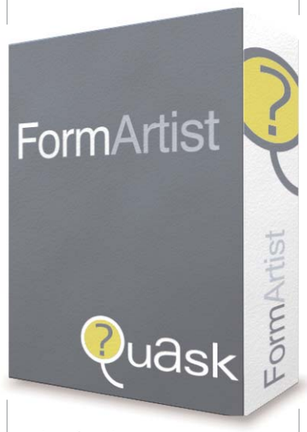
Quask FormArtist WorkFlow

Corporations wishing to build a workflow application can spend thousands of dollars on research and programming. After product deployment, the application can cost even more for enhancements and bugs. After a recent demonstration by company CEO Freddy May, we are convinced that this product is an excellent alternative to high cost programming and an effective way to build corporate workflow solutions. Quask's FormArtist WorkFlow receives our Editor's Choice Award for functionality, value and company support.

Quask's CEO and US support personnel bent over backwards to help us understand, build and deploy an example workflow application. The support that Quask offers is first-rate and will likely be one of the keys to this company's success. Many nationally-known companies have already jumped on the FormArtist wagon including an internationally known cruise line.

When starting your application, it's best to have it designed in a product like Visio so you know the workflow steps you're going to accomplish. By November 2005, Quask should have a built-in addition that will allow you to design the workflow in such an environment and then import the design into the application. This add-on should save designers quite a bit of time when developing a workflow solution.

After your design, you set up users and



roles for the application and the product does implement Windows authentication if you wish. At this time you're ready to begin designing the form(s) that are used during development. The form is driven by a scripting language particular to FormArtist that drives the elements of the form. Before you fret about learning another language, the form designer actually inserts the code based off decisions you make in an easy to understand dialog box format. Although we didn't have to insert any code ourselves, the scripting was fairly easy to understand.

The power of FormArtist WorkFlow is the ability to direct workflow action requests to other users. As an example, a user submits a request which is directed to his manager. Once the manager approves the request, the product submits two requests to other managers for their approval as well. You can design the application to alert the original user if the request has been approved or denied when all the managers sign off on the request. In addition, if a manager doesn't sign off in a preset time period, the program can email them a certain number of times to remind them or delegate the responsibility to someone else. This is a powerful product!

Results of the workflow product can be sent by email, stored in an XML format or stored in a SQL Server database using an ODBC connection. Based on the solution you design, the FormArtist LiveStats product is a highly configurable report engine that can display or export reports in HTML, RTF or Excel formats.

The price tag for FormArtist WorkFlow is in the $15,000 range directly from Quask (with offices in the US and England.) Considering the time and money you'll save developing a workflow solution and the excellent customer service and support that Quask provides, corporate IT managers should have a serious look into this product.

MAIN FEATURES

A 160GB external hard drive the connects through a FireWire-800 interface.

OTHER INFO

The drive's 7200 RPM spindle speed, 10ms seek time and 8MB buffer make it a virtual speed demon.

PRICE Under $200

www.lacie.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Fast FireWire-800 external hard drive that's hard to beat.

- Not much is known about the company or tech support.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

LaCie d2 160GB Extreme

We're always on the lookout for a peripheral device or program that will increase a user's productivity, speed up a network or a product that brings a new computer solution into the limelight. The LaCie d2 Extreme 160GB external hard drive does exactly that and wins our Best In Class Award.

This external hard drive differs from many competitive products by offering connectivity through the new FireWire 800 (also known as FireWire-B or the IEEE 1394b) standard. The new standard offers data throughput speeds of 800Mbs/second, and that my friends, is fast. The drive's 7200 RPM spindle speed, 10ms seek time and 8MB buffer will provide your PC a virtual speed demon in digital data storage.

Most desktop and notebook computers don't offer the new FireWire 800 standard, so you will need to spend an additional $70 or so for a PCI interface card. Labeled as the LaCie d2 160GB Extreme With Triple Interface, you can still connect the drive through a standard FireWire (1394a) interface or USB 2.0 high speed port although the data transfer speed benefits won't be as noticeable.

For testing purposes, we used an ADS Technologies PYRO FireWire 800 PCI card and were extremely impressed with the results. We transferred a series of 250MB files to the drive and averaged a little under 12MB per second. Our testing also confirmed that as we increased the file sizes past 600MB, the transfer rate began to decrease. In realistic terms though, data manipulation and everyday tasks won't use the larger sized files that we used to test the throughput.

Packaged in a sleek plastic case, the unit includes a stand that keeps the drive in a vertical position. An optional kit does offer the ability to house the drive in a 1U mount rack.

Surprisingly the drive was rather cool and quiet, not needing the services of a cooling fan. The casing also includes a Kensington lock port for added security.

Even though you may require an additional PCI card for FireWire 800 support, when you add in the cost of the drive it's still a cost effective solution to increase the speed of hard drive data transfer.

Pricing of the LaCie d2 Extreme 160GB hard drive was anywhere between $170 and $200. If needed, the card and the drive would cost under $250 (and you can hang additional FireWire 800 devices from the card, too.) If you dare to visit the company's web site at **www.lacie.com** you may just be enticed to look at their other larger external drives.

MAIN FEATURES

This is an amazing file server system. It's easy to setup and configure, and is lightening fast.

OTHER INFO

A 2Gbit Fibre Channel storage system that is capable of providing 28.8 terabytes of storage.

PRICE $17,383 ($18,380 with StorView)

www.nstor.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Check this server out if you need large storage capabilities.

- Someone with experience in large server systems will be needed.

EASE OF USE	90%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	93%

nStor NextStor 4900F Series

We love this appliance! The nStor NextStor 4900F-series 2Gbit Fibre Channel storage system is one of the fastest we've seen on the market. The unit we tested is perfect for an enterprise environment it is capable of providing 28.8 terabytes of storage we think you'll be amazed by this unit as well. Easy to setup and configure, the series wins our Editor's Choice Award for outstanding performance.

We're not the only ones that like this system. One of nStor's customers, Darryl Riddlespurger, the President of Storehouse Technologies a San Diego solutions integrator, relayed to us that the product "offers an exceptional Fibre Channel solution delivering outstanding reliability, performance and flexibility. With embedded StorView management software it provides centralized access across your nStor storage network without the need for host agents." He also stated that the company's advanced service offerings "Provides me with the piece of mind that nStor stand behind their products." Pretty impressive, wouldn't you say?

The 4900F series comes in four different configurations, with four 1 or 2 GB Fibre channel host interfaces (depending on the model) you'll find support for Fabric N_port, NL_port and FC-AL protocols. The 4910F come with one processor while the high-end 4940F includes four. Two of the units include 2GB cache (two with 1GB) for quick performance through automatic cache tuning and built-in SAN volume sharing that offers 'on the fly' LUN assignments.

The appliance is a 1U rack-mountable unit with 24 indicator LEDs and a sleek looking black panel display. Two 350-watt power supplies (one redundant) are housed within the 4900F and offers nStor's Power Factor Correction feature. We highly suggest that you consider a powerful software program to configure and drive the 4900F series devices. Although StorView runs around $997, this web browser-based software offers a myriad of different utilities specifically designed to run and report on the activities of the appliance. The software gives you an actual graphic (somewhat like animation) view of the activities of the unit and the attached drives.

Depending on the model of the 4900F-series storage system you'll find support for single or dual RAID configurations and the RAID offerings are plentiful. Up to 64 RAID arrays are available and they can be mixed between RAID levels 0, 1 and 5 as well as levels 10 and 50. The storage capabilities of the system is truly remarkable and dependent on the drives you purchase can be extremely fast.

The 4900F-series include a three-year return to the factory hardware warranty, 90-day software warranty and 8-to-5 toll free technical support. The company does offer optional on-site services for an additional price. The nStor NextStor 4900F-series are truly an exceptionally powerful group of storage systems and are well worth the asking price. Details and specifications of each of the series models can be viewed at the company's web site at **www.nstor.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

About the weight and size of a notebook, the iM4 amplifier and speakers works with most multi-media devices.

OTHER INFO

The MaxxBass technology really accentuated bass sound and gave the speakers that extra oomph.

PRICE $75

www.alteclansing.com

Altec Lansing inMotion iM4

How many of us have seen the countless number of youngsters (and adults) with an iPod in their shirt pocket stringed up to a separated pair of earbud headphones to their ears? Chances are we've all had the encounter. The iPod is a very mobile unit but you may wish to park it when you when you hear the music through the Altec Lansing inMotion iPod iM4 amplifier and speakers.

Altec Lansing has been in the business of audio since the 1920's when they began production of theatre speakers for those new talking movies. Later in life they began to produce other audio equipment and were well-known in the broadcasting industry for their early brand of mixers. Needless to say, the company has a very rich history of producing quality products.

There are two flavors of inMotion speakers for the iPod. The iM7 is a portable speaker system that is geared for dockable iPods. Its slick tube-looking also drives up the cost with a list price of $250. On the other hand, the iM4 with an internet price near $75 is more affordable to the wallet. Although portable and battery powered it is a bit bulkier than the iM7.

About the size and weight of an ultra-light notebook it can connect to almost any audio device that can connect to its retractable sub-mini connector, which doesn't limit it to a dockable iPod like the iM7. There is also another jack for a second input but does require the purchase of an additional cable. The attached speakers lay flat with the base unit when not in use or being transported. Both speakers are easily positioned to a 90-degree angle on each side with the base while listening to music.

Both speakers are rated at 2-watts per channel (at 8-ohms) for a total 4-watt RMS presentation and have a frequency response of 60 to 20,000 Hz. During our test of this system we used both an iPod and an MP3 player. There was very little distortion and when we did encounter any we simply backed off on the amount of output volume from the player. The iM4's MaxxBass technology really accentuated bass sound and gave the speakers that extra oomph. The system is powered by four "AA" batteries and the rechargeable alkaline batteries we used lasted over twelve hours of continuous play.

Whether you use the iM4 with an iPod, MP3 player or even a notebook computer, the Altec Lansing inMotion iPod iM4 speakers produce a quality sound while having the mobility to be used almost anywhere. You can purchase the system at the company's web site a **www.alteclansing.com** for $99 or search around on the internet for a better price.

BCM VERDICT

+ The speakers and amplifier produce a very good sound for the price.
- Can't take it with you when you're jogging.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

MAIN FEATURES

Creative's answer to the iPod with a 5GB hard drive and an FM tuner.

OTHER INFO

Can play up to 150 hours of MP3, WMA and WAV music files.

PRICE $179

www.creative.com

Creative 5GB Zen Micro

Zen Micro should not be mistaken as a brand of religion but rather Creative's continuing effort to make a dent in the small portable MP3 player market. Unlike some of its competitors however, the Zen Micro also serves duty as an FM radio tuner and voice recorder. Available in ten different colors suitable for most anyone's taste, the Seagate 5GB hard drive has room to record or store a large amount of data or sound.

Compact and light, the Zen Micro weighs only four ounces and is the size of a standard pack of cigarettes. It's rather amazing that you can have that more storage space available in such a small package. Creative Labs' manufacturing process apparently uses a tough plastic case to enclose the device and it was able to withstand several of our 'knock it off the desk' tests that we perform on portable storage devices.

You won't find any buttons on the Zen Micro, rather there are six touch pads that react to the slightest touch. Four of these touch pads perform normal functions like play, forward, rewind, and back. The two other buttons work to set the units options while the other is used to maneuver around option settings and your playlist selections. Missing from this device is a dedicated volume control which is accomplished by scrolling through the options to finally set the volume level.

Life of the lithium-ion rechargeable battery averaged around ten hours of constant play before a charge was required. There are two methods of recharge available including the use of power from your USB port. The device can also be used with an AC adapter which is included with a certain number of limited editions of the product, otherwise you'll need to shell out an additional $39 for the option. Upload the songs to your Zen Micro through Creative's MediaSource Player/Organizer and Zen Media Explorer. The USB cable is included and you can even upload your Outlook contacts, schedule and address book to the device.

The Zen Micro will play MP3, WMA and WAV files with the capacity to play around 150 hours of music in the WMA format. Used as a voice recorder, Creative states that you'll be able to record 10 hours of audio which is saved on the drive as a WAV file. The device is also an FM tuner for use with your local radio stations and has the option to record the station for delayed play.

In direct competition with the iPod, Creative's Zen Micro offers as many features but adds value in the way of more storage and an FM tuner to sweeten the deal. Creative's web site at **www.creative.com** offers the Zen Micro for $199, however you'll find competition on the internet with the best price of $179.

BCM VERDICT

+ Has a long battery life if you like listening to your tunes on the road.
- Costs more than the Apple iPod.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	93%

MAIN FEATURES

The Delphi XMSkyFi2 is one of the company's latest satellite receivers for XM subscribers.

OTHER INFO

Can set up to 30 preset channels notifies you when a favorite song is playing on a channel.

PRICE $120

www.delphi.com

BCM VERDICT

+ If you like XM satellite music then you'll like this receiver.

- About $20 more than competitors unless you catch it on sale.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	90%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Delphi XMSkyFi2 Receiver

The Delphi XMSkyFi2 is one of the company's latest satellite receivers for XM subscribers. The latest unit offers some additional functionality over Delphi's original receiver the XMSkyFi, most notable in the upgrade is the ability to replay audio up to a half in length such as a DVR might do for video. The new model also will transmit the music signal to one of 12 pre-selected frequencies on your FM radio.

The front panel is also upgraded to a pleasing and more readable white and black display rail receive song and artist information as well as the ability to receive sports scores and stock quotes. You can set up to 30 preset channels and an interesting feature that notifies you when one of your favorite artists has a song on one of the channels.

The Delphi XMSkyFi2 comes with a remote control unit which, quite frankly, is easier to understand and use than the unit's front panel. There are additional accessories such as a car kit, a full fledged stereo system with amplifier, a marine kit for boats and a boom box setup. Each of these additional options is priced quite reasonable on the company's website.

The XMSkyFi2 retails for $120 and occasionally the company runs a special that will knock that price down to an even $100. For more details and specifications visit the manufacturer's site at **www.delphi.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

The device is designed to control upwards of 16 different entertainment products.

OTHER INFO

Consider the fact that you'll never need to buy another universal remote.

PRICE $249

www.logitech.com

BCM VERDICT

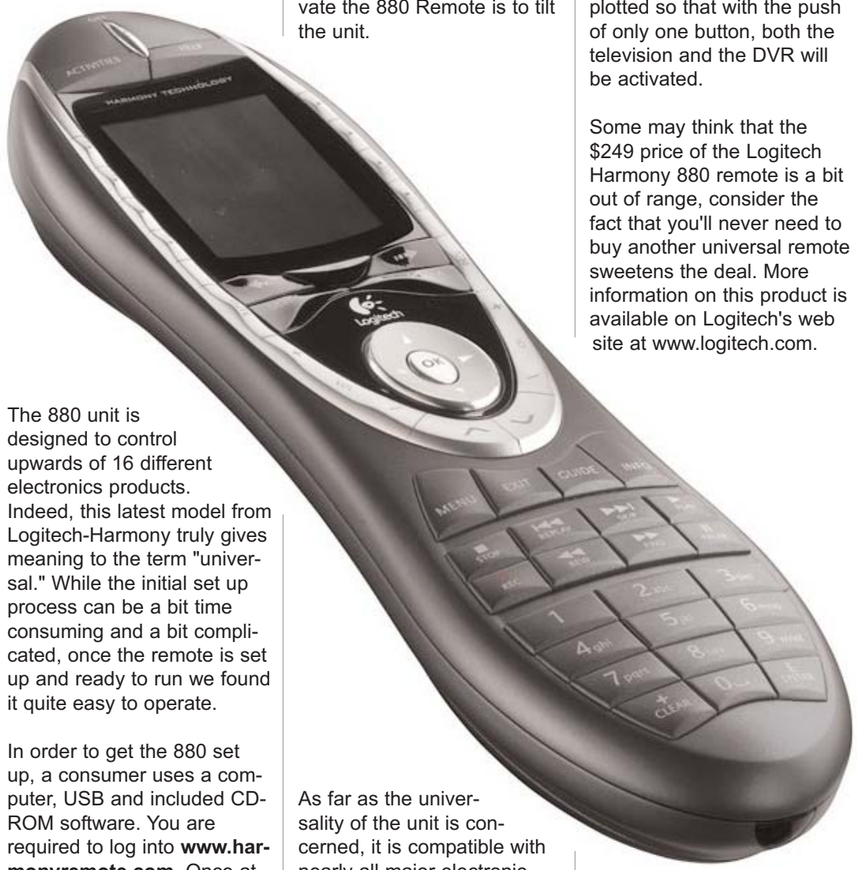
+ Probably one of the best universal remotes we've run across.

- The price is a bit steep for a remote control device.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Logitech Harmony 880 Remote

With many consumers on the hunt for a user friendly universal remote control unit, there is now a wide array of different products on the market. Recently (during the summer of 2005), the Logitech Harmony 880 was introduced. We should mention that Logitech recently took over Harmony Remotes and this remote is the first fruit of that merger.



The 880 unit is designed to control upwards of 16 different electronics products. Indeed, this latest model from Logitech-Harmony truly gives meaning to the term "universal." While the initial set up process can be a bit time consuming and a bit complicated, once the remote is set up and ready to run we found it quite easy to operate.

In order to get the 880 set up, a consumer uses a computer, USB and included CD-ROM software. You are required to log into **www.harmonyremote.com**. Once at the Harmony web site, establish an account and follow the sites directions. The site's server will create an appropriate package in the form of a single digital file that is uploaded to the remote and contains all of the settings for a newly acquired 880 unit.

The unit comes with a rechargeable battery and related cradle. The unit is energized just like a cordless phone. In addition, the unit automatically shuts off after a time period of non-use. All a user needs to do to reactivate the 880 Remote is to tilt the unit.

As far as the universality of the unit is concerned, it is compatible with nearly all major electronic media products now on the market. Only those products that have been recently introduced to the market lack compatibility and we understand that the company is always striving include those devices within a relatively short time.

The 880 includes what Harmony calls "Smart State Technology." Smart State Technology allows a user to create so-called activities. In other words, if a user enjoys recording television programs on a DVR, an activity can be plotted so that with the push of only one button, both the television and the DVR will be activated.

Some may think that the $249 price of the Logitech Harmony 880 remote is a bit out of range, consider the fact that you'll never need to buy another universal remote sweetens the deal. More information on this product is available on Logitech's web site at www.logitech.com.

MAIN FEATURES

A product that takes handwriting to a new level by easily converting it into text.

OTHER INFO

The Logitech io2 Digital Writing System is perfect for doctors, nurses, lawyers and students.

PRICE $158

www.logitech.com

BCM VERDICT

+ Great device for taking handwriting and transferring it to the computer.

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Logitech io2 Digital Writing System

Most of us are familiar with OCR (optical character recognition) and VR (voice recognition) programs that assist in producing documents without the need of sitting at a keyboard and typing the information in. We probably thought that all the bases were covered with these two technologies. As the commercial says, "But wait…..there's more!"

The Logitech io2 Digital Writing System takes your handwriting and converts it into text that can be imported into a document. Maybe we're the first one to coin the phrase "HR, Handwriting Recognition" , and maybe not. This system is perfect for the home or office and wins our Best In Class Award for uniqueness, functionality and accuracy.

Unlike many of the pen-to-computer products on the market that require you to lug around a digitizer drawing board, the only requirements for the io2-DWS is to carry around the unit's wireless pen, DWS-specific paper and make sure you have the USB cradle hooked up to a PC. You may think that this is a wireless pen but it's not. The pen actually records your handwriting within and then transfers the information through the USB cradle interface. It's not necessary to be in the same room as the cradle, but you do have a 40-page limit according to Logitech. In addition to handwriting, the system will transfer drawings as 300DPI graphics that can be exported to your choice of imaging programs.

We do suggest that you take the time to go through the io2 Digital Writing System's learning stage if you have less-than-perfect handwriting. During our test of this product we received 100% recognition without the process but it's not suggested for everyone. The character that we drew transferred perfectly and before you knew it we added color and background to produce a pretty impressive (and dare we say it, funny) cartoon that was passed around the office.

The io2-DWS includes the digital pen and USB cradle and 5 ink refills while the CD includes the products drivers and MyScript Notes which is the handwriting conversion software. While the package includes one of each of these items, refills are reasonably price: Smart Paper Notebook is $5.95 (160 pages) and Smart Paper notepad at $11.99 (128 pages.) There's an optional Smart Paper Post-it notes pad for $4.95 that includes 50 notes per pad.

The Logitech io2 Digital Writing System is perfect for doctors, nurses, lawyers and even students that normally write information that needs to be transferred to a digital format. You'll find the best internet price around $158 and there are quite a few retailers that offer the system. More information and a demonstration are available at **www.logitech.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

Picture resolution has an inspiring maximum 1280x960-1.3 megapixel image.

OTHER INFO

Video resolution is rated at a maximum 640x480 resolution at 30 frames-per-second.

PRICE $69

www.logitech.com

BCM VERDICT

+ If you like Logitech's video cams then you'll like this one, too.

- An optional power source would be the only improvement.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Logitech QuickCam Pro 4000

In the early-to-mid 90's teleconferencing was an option only available to the corporate elite and was quite expensive to accomplish. The internet opened many doors through IP-to-IP connection and a host of teleconferencing programs (like NetMeeting) were introduced to lower the cost of this business option.

While you will find a flooded market of cheap USB webcams on the market today, Logitech has produced a long line of reliable products specifically geared to fill this particular niche. The QuickCam Pro 4000 is the company's latest offering with a host of features and software that make it stand out in front of the pack. While you can find cheaper models, the internet price of $69 was quite reasonable and well worth the investment.

The feature that stood out to us when we opened the box and installed the camera through a USB port was the motion detector function. In this particular mode, a picture is taken whenever the motion threshold is reached or exceeded. While you might not use this function in every day home use, businesses will find it an exciting option for security applications.

Video resolution is rated at a maximum 640x480 resolution at 30 frames-per-second. Our video capture test was extremely impressive as we detected no dropped frames in our five-minute trial. Picture resolution was even more inspiring with a maximum 1280x960-1.3 megapixel image. Although some forms of additional lighting always effects image quality and color representation, the QuickCam Pro 4000 worked extremely well in standard room-lit conditions. The digital zoom, pan and tilt functions worked extremely well and these three features really aid in the functionality of the webcam. A built-in microphone performed quite well with a minimal amount of background noise and the audio is imported into the computer through the USB port avoiding the need to connect it to your sound card.

In addition to the software drivers for both PC and Mac environments, the QuickCam includes normal video and picture capturing programs, the package includes Logitech's IM Video Companion, video-enabled Yahoo! Messenger, a video email program, video broadcasting and editing software, an animation program, a functional and fun web album creator as well as SpotLife's VideoSnap that will enable you to add video to your eBay auctions.

The Logitech QuickCam Pro 4000 includes the company's two year limited warranty as well as email, internet and non-toll free telephone support. A little bigger than the size of a softball, this lightweight webcam is a value for under $70. More information on the product is available at **www.logitech.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

This tiny and compact headset weighs 23 grams and conveniently fits the curvature of most ears.

OTHER INFO

The Bluetooth compatibility lets you use it with phones, computers and PDAs.

PRICE $35

www.plantronics.com

Plantronics M2500 Headset

There are some states and cities in the country that have banned the use of cell phones unless the device uses headphones. If your particular brand of phone doesn't come with the earpiece but includes Bluetooth technology, you may want to consider the Plantronics M2500 headset.

This tiny and compact unit weighs 23 grams and conveniently fits the curvature of most ears. While the main market is for cell phones, the Bluetooth compatibility allows you to use it with computers and PDAs that employ the same technology.

The M2500 comes with a charger for the internal battery however we found this device could easily handle five days of moderate use with a cell phone before a recharge was necessary. That length of time could differ if you use it with other devices.

There are quite a few number of cell phones that work with the M2500 headset as long as they include the Bluetooth interface. The company has a quick way to look up the compatibility with your particular phone by entering the manufacturer and brand name of the unit. You can find out more information and check to see if the headset works with your phone at **www.plantronics.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Good price for a Bluetooth headset with multiple applications.

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

MAIN FEATURES

The Sony Vaio Mouse is perfect for Vaio notebook owners as a perfect companion for their systems.

OTHER INFO

Weighs less than 4 ounces, cups in the palm of your hand and offers 800 DPI resolution.

PRICE $28

www.sonystyle.com

Sony Vaio Mouse VGP-UMS50

SONY

One of the biggest complaints we care about from notebook users is in regards to the size of the mouse included with most units. Point in case, is the airline traveler who has that little tray to maneuver of both laptop and mouse on. The Sony Vaio Mouse VGP-UMS50 is the perfect rodent to carry with you on such travels and is a bonus for Vaio notebook owners as the mouse is a perfect companion for their systems.

Weighing less than 4 ounces, this optical mouse easily cups in the palm of your hand while offering the accuracy of 800 DPI resolution. The VGP-UMS50 offers a very smooth movement and the scroll-wheel was very effective when paging through documents. If you use this mouse with a desktop you may need an extension to a USB port as the device was intended for use with a notebook.

Installation was quite easy and as a Plug-N-Play device was quickly detected by our windows system. While most Sony equipment is available on their web site at **www.sonystyle.com** we found several internet retailers are offered a competitive price. You should be able to beat Sony's $40 price tag with an average cost around $28.

BCM VERDICT

+ The perfect mouse match for you Sony Vaio notebook.

- So small, make sure you don't leave it somewhere (otherwise it's great.)

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

MAIN FEATURES

A relatively inexpensive wireless graphics tablet that uses Bluetooth technology for mobility.

OTHER INFO

The unit has a range of 25 feet and assists with the outline of photographs as well as a freehand diagrams.

PRICE $200

www.wacom.com

BCM VERDICT

+ If you need a Bluetooth-compatible tablet then

- Could have been built just a bit more sturdier.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Wacom Graphire Bluetooth Tablet

If you're a graphic designer, artist or cartoonist knowledgeable in using graphic tablet, then you may want to check out a new wireless tablet from Wacom. The Graphire offers an unwired Bluetooth solution that provides freedom from being tied down to a PC or Macintosh computer.

With the ability to work from an easy chair with the tablet on your lap, this relatively cost efficient product has a range of 25 feet. We were able to effectively use this product during our tests and award it our Best In Class Award for functionality and value.

Although one day we might like to see this device implemented with a Pocket PC or PDA, it was quite easy to install the drivers on our PC and Mac machines. After reboot, the systems saw the Graphire and we were ready to use the tablet immediately. We would like to mention that you should glance over the documentation on the CD rather than the start-up guide if you experience any problems with the installation.

The Wacom Graphire Bluetooth Tablet comes with both a mouse and a pen. As you would expect, the mouse operates in the normal fashion of such a device using relative positioning rather than absolute. We found the wireless mouse operated as expected, was easy to move around and we experience no stickiness. On the other hand, the graphics pen uses absolute positioning on the 8"x6" tablet. The tablet has a protective plastic covering to avoid any marking or damage to the device's sensitive surface.

Our tests of the pen functions were performed in three different areas. Our office cartoonist easily sketched one of his favorite (and shall we say satirical) characters with extreme accuracy. We traced the outline of a photograph as well as a freehand electronic diagram and were quite pleased with the results.

Once the Graphire's drivers are installed you can immediately use the tablet with many of your favorite programs, especially any Microsoft Office-related products like Word, Publisher and PowerPoint. The product also ships with three software programs, Adobe Photoshop Elements 2, Corel's Painter Essentials 2 and nik multimedia's Color Efex Pro 2 GE. We also found it quite easy to use with Microsoft's OneNote to help us with our daily reminders.

You should be able to find the Wacom Graphire Bluetooth Tablet on the internet for roughly $200, which is a good value for a wireless tablet with this kind of accuracy and mobility. Technical specifications are available on the company's web site at **www.wacom.com**.

MAIN FEATURES

Connectivity is available through a combination of T1 or E1 circuits, 24 analog circuits and 12 ISDN BRA circuits.

OTHER INFO

Zultys does offer a great line of phones that take advantage of the MX350's features.

PRICE $3,000

www.zultys.com

BCM VERDICT

+ A great all-around phone system for use in medium-sized businesses.

- Could offer packages that include the system and a certain number of phones.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

Zultys MX250 And Phones

When we received the Zultys MX250 we were a little apprehensive that such a phone system, capable of 250 phone connections, would be overwhelming and would take hours to configure. Our first-look observation was incorrect and the more we tested the unit, the more comfortable we became. We had the system working in less than an hour, the phone conversations were crystal clear and the Zultys phones have all the bells and whistles you'd want in a business desk phone. Overall, we were very pleased with the MX250 and award it our Editor's Choice Award for functionality, performance and value.

The MX250 is a 2U rack-mountable system, performs the duties of an internet gateway (NAT, firewall, SSL VPN, router and switch) and also a phone system PBX. Depending on your configuration, connectivity is available through a combination of T1 or E1 circuits, 24 analog circuits and 12 ISDN BRA circuits. The MX250 system offers VoIP (Voice-over-IP) functionality by using IP addresses with each phone in a DHCP environment.

Configuration is accomplished through an installed Windows program called MXIE (pronounced mixie.) While you'll have to connect this box to your LAN through an Ethernet 10/100-BaseT connection, anyone on the network can access the MX250 with proper rights. Dreading hours of configuration, the process took less time to accomplish than anticipated. MXIE was quite easy to understand and operate. We set up one of the four auto-attendants, configured each phone on the system (and assigned phone functions), set voice mail policies and within 45 minutes we had the MX250 working.

In addition to the phone functions, the MX250 can communicate with your desktop and email applications like Outlook. Voice mail can be attached or listened to and there are instant messaging capabilities available with this appliance.

Zultys does offer a great line of phones that take advantage of the MX350's features. We tested the 4x4 and 2x2 phones and found them easy to understand and operate. Offering the features available to most phone systems, we were impressed with a few in particular such as 5-way conferencing, phone login, keypad or phone lock, full duplex speaker phone and our favorite, a one-touch Do Not Disturb button.

If someone in your organization has that technically savvy or previous phone system experience, they're likely able to understand the setup and configuration process. Unfortunately, you can't count on Zultys to help you out in that department. Literature suggests that you use one of their VARs or integrators to install the MX250 and offers no phone support with that process. Pricing for the system starts at roughly $3000 without any licensing. These can be purchased for concurrent connections, user count and phone functions. A full-functioned 250 user system will likely run over $40,000. Zultys does offer limited temporary licenses that do give you an opportunity to test functions of the MX350 before purchasing. Technical specifications, and very good ones at that, are available at the company's web site at **www.zultys.com**.

VPN

MAIN FEATURES

A super-secure VPN appliance and more for medium to large companies.

OTHER INFO

The system can handle up to 2,200 SSL transactions per second.

PRICE $20,000 (with 100 licenses)

www.arraynetworks.net

Array Networks SPX 3000

We recently had the chance to test run the Array Networks SPX 3000 SSL VPN appliance and what we found out was, it did more than just take care of VPN applications. It also does very well at SSL application processing as well as firewall protection and web services. We award this unit with our Editor's Choice Award for security and functionality.

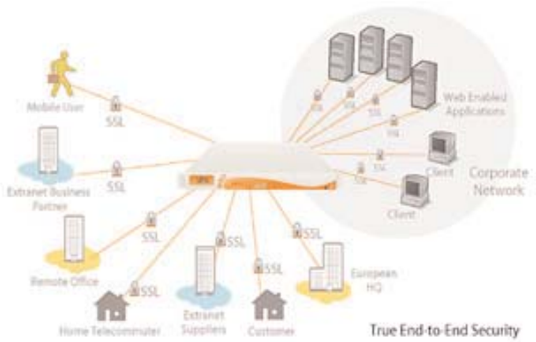
The SPX 3000 is intended to take care of a medium to large class operation within the constriction of 2500 concurrent users. If your particular operation requires more than that, you may want to look into the system's bigger brother, the SPX 5000. This unit is more scalable to enterprise and ISP operations.

The ability to allow services from a variety of different requestors was impressive. Whether it was from remote offices, telecommuters, PDA users, extranet or intranets, even Microsoft's BizNet applications can all be configured to work with the SPX 3000. SSL security is performed at the operating system level, using the Array Operating System and the level is based on the settings of the particular operations. The system can handle up to 2,200 SSL transactions per second.

Connectivity to the Array Networks SPX 3000 is available through two 10/100/1000BaseT Ethernet ports. For firewall protection the system has packet inspections, permit and denial policies, DDoS prevention and Layer 7 filtering. We really appreciated the application support of this product, fully compatible with Windows Terminal Service, Citrix, Oracle, telnet and mainframe operations. If the application utilizes Java or an ActiveX object with TCP support, with very few exceptions it will work with this appliance. We also found it quite interesting that the URL-aliasing features can support 128 independent virtual sites even though they share the same IP address, port, certificates and domain name.

Authentication of VPN service users is available through LDAP, Radius and SecurID as well as certificate-based and local database authentications. Within the VPN network you may set up group and user policies with each of them having detailed permit and denial policies as well. We used Array Pilot, a secure web-based management program, to configure the system. Although it was a bit tedious and took a little time to set up, we thoroughly believe that this device offers some of the best security measures on the market today.

The cost of the 1U rack-mountable Array Networks SPX 3000 is around $25,000 with a 100-user license and additional licensing is done through different tiers. You can find more information and technical specifications on the appliance at the company's web site at **www.arraynetworks.net**.



BCM VERDICT

+ The VPN security of this appliance is phenomenal.

- The price may be out of range for some companies.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

Editor's Business Computing Choice 2005

Wireless

MAIN FEATURES

This small appliance can connect to the internet or your network, a USB printer and your stereo system.

OTHER INFO

It functions as a Wireless-B/G access point with the capability of supporting up to 10 Wi-Fi clients.

PRICE $109

www.apple.com

Apple AirPort Express

When you see the Apple Computers logo on a product, you normally assume that the device can only be used on a Macintosh computer. The Apple AirPort Express dispels that line of thinking by offering compatibility with both PC and Mac machines. Although it doesn't offer the same functionality of a wireless router, it comes pretty close and maybe a little more.

This small appliance plugs into a wall socket for power while offering connectivity to the internet or your network, a USB printer and your stereo system. We understand this might be a little confusing upfront but we'll make it clearer. For what it capable of, we give the Apple AirPort Express our Editor's Choice Award for value and unique functionality.

The AirPort Express performs the function of a Wireless-B/G access point with the capability of supporting up to 10 Wi-Fi clients. The decision to use the device with a cable/DSL modem or extending an existing Ethernet network is yours, but you can only use it for one or the other. Once the decision is made you can plug a printer to the AirPort Express' high speed USB port where it will be accessible to every computer using the wireless signal. The final connection available on the device is for audio. Whether you decide to use digital audio output (with a Toslink digital fiber optic cable) or a mini stereo-to-dual RCA cable you'll be able to play streamed music to a stereo system or powered speakers.

To stream music to the AirPort Express you'll need iTunes version 4.6, which is included on the CD shipped with the system. What you'll notice is an additional option on the iTunes program that will stream the playlist to the device which will be relayed to your stereo system. If you do stream the audio to the AirPort Express you won't be able to listen to it on the local machine. The unit is also smart enough to detect and stop another PC on the network from streaming audio while it is currently in use.

To help you with troubleshooting, and LED displays different colors and conditions to indicate the device's current status. A solid green light means everything is okay, flashing green indicates the starting sequence while a flashing yellow means there's a problem with your internet service provider or you're out of range.

Hopefully we've cleared up any confusion and explained how this unique device offers quite a few different solutions in such a small box. The Apple AirPort Express is available at several internet retailers and we found one company with a price of $109. You'll find more information on Apple's web site under the Hardware-Digital Life selection at **www.apple.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ A great device to add Wi-Fi capabilities if you don't have them yet for your Apple.

- Has a slight learning curve to it, have documentation ready.

EASE OF USE	100%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	97%

MAIN FEATURES

The NIC card has a high-gain antenna that will boost your signal reception.

OTHER INFO

The card's 6dBi antenna offers almost double the sensitivity of most notebook wireless adapters.

PRICE $60

www.hawkingtech.com

Hawking HWC54D Network Adapter

While the speed of your Wireless-b/g network is meeting your requirements, you find that often you are out of range of the system's router or the signal isn't strong enough. At this point you may want to consider the Hawking HWC54D network adapter. Unlike many notebook network adapters, this unit contains a high-gain antenna that will boost your signal reception while extending the range between you and your router. This adapter really does what it professes and receives our Editor's Choice Award for functionality and value.

Although the HWC54D will work with any version of Windows, post-98SE, there are no drivers yet for MacIntosh or Linux systems. The installation was very easy to perform and upon a system reboot, easily detected the card and our Wireless-G network. We were happy to know that the adapter offers both WEP and WPA security. The card can also use TKIP and AES encryption for a tighter network environment.

While the Hawking HWC54D network adapter delivered an impressive 23Mbps maximum throughput in a dedicated Wireless-G network, we did see that throughput drop to a little over 15Mbps in a mixed Wireless-G and Wireless-B environment. What really surprised us, although we somewhat expected it, was the new range capabilities over the previous network adapter. For this test we took the notebook with the old adapter to the limit of its range at 210 feet. Replacing it with the HWC54D, we were able to extend the range above the 300 feet range. The range extension if achieved by unfolding the adjustable antenna and then aiming it directly towards your router location. The card's 6dBi antenna offers almost double the sensitivity of most integrated notebook wireless adapters.

If you seriously need the range gain, then you're likely able to overlook the power consumption of the HWC54D adapter. We suppose it's likely because of the advanced circuitry that provides the gain, but with our testing we saw the notebook's battery life shorten by around 45 minutes. We could help remedy that by using an 8-cell battery compared to the 4-cell one that we use.

One think to note, the adapter does include JiWire's Hotspot Locater which, after registration, will give you access to hot spots (commercial and public) in more than 70 countries. Many of these hotspots do charge a fee but will you will find some free locations as well.

When you consider the range extension, both online and 24/7 phone support, two year warranty and a 25 page user manual, the Hawking HWC54D network adapter is a pretty good deal at an average $60 cost. Hawking does offer more information on the card at **www.hawkingtech.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Nice antenna system to boost your Wi-Fi signal.

- Might stick out a bit too far on some notebooks.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

MAIN FEATURES

An effective access point appliance in front-line defense that was easy to setup and use.

OTHER INFO

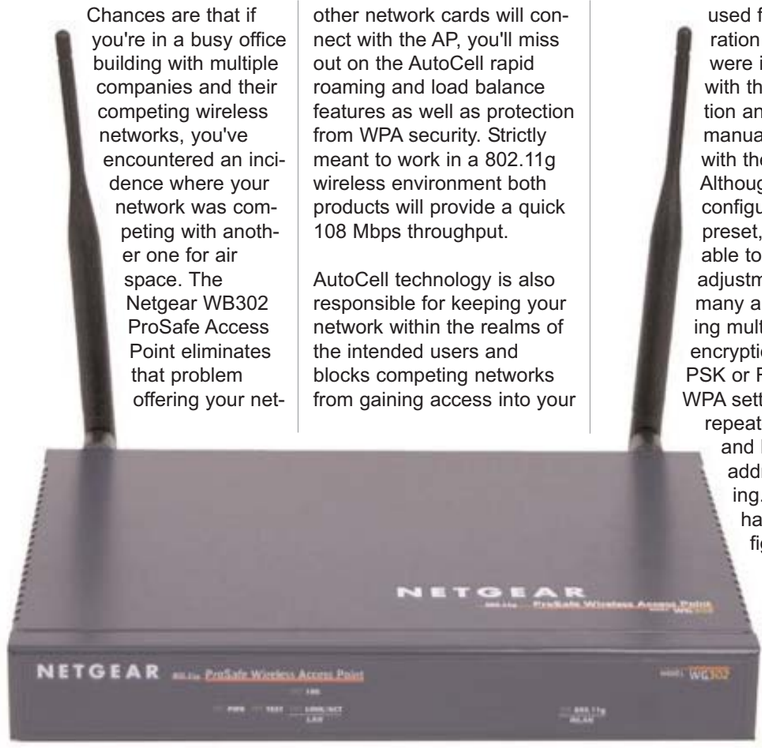
The Netgear WG302 blocks competing networks from gaining access into your system.

PRICE $240-WG302, $130-WAG511

www.netgear.com

Netgear WG302 ProSafe Access Point

Chances are that if you're in a busy office building with multiple companies and their competing wireless networks, you've encountered an incidence where your network was competing with another one for air space. The Netgear WB302 ProSafe Access Point eliminates that problem offering your network the security and access that you require.



We recently had one of these situations in our office building and had first hand experience of how this appliance eliminates those worries. The WG302 was easy to setup and use, was very effective in front-line security defense and receives our Editor's Choice Award for functionality and value.

The key to this system is Netgear's AutoCell technology. You won't see the desired effect of the technology unless your client computer system's use the associative WAG511 ProSafe Dual Band Wireless PC Card. Although other network cards will connect with the AP, you'll miss out on the AutoCell rapid roaming and load balance features as well as protection from WPA security. Strictly meant to work in a 802.11g wireless environment both products will provide a quick 108 Mbps throughput.

AutoCell technology is also responsible for keeping your network within the realms of the intended users and blocks competing networks from gaining access into your system. There are times when data is very sensitive and protection is a must, this alternative to a normal Wi-Fi setup offers 802.11i-ready security.

The Netgear WG302 ProSafe Access Point is produced in a neat looking (bordering on a gothic look) metal case. We like this sturdy casing in comparison to some of the more flimsy plastic cases of competitors. The two antennas boxed with the unit are removable and can be replaced by some of Netgear's more powerful antennas if your situation requires the change.

A browser-based program is used for configuration and we were impressed with the installation and reference manual include with the WG302. Although many configurations are preset, you'll be able to make adjustments in many areas including multiple WEP encryption levels, PSK or RADIUS WPA settings, repeater options and MAC address filtering. You will have to configure each of your access points separately which may take a little more time depending on the number of APs.

If you've decided that this is what you need to cure your network competition woes, it's time to look at the price. The average cost we found from internet retailers was in the $240 range. The WAG511 network cards were roughly $130. You'll need to weigh the benefits that such a combination provides, but if you're tired of pulling out your hair because of network competition the deal looks pretty sweet. Netgear has more information on both products and AutoCell technology at **www.netgear.com**

BCM VERDICT

+ A perfect access point device for use with competitive Wi-Fi signals.

- Configuration could take longer than some other systems.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	95%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	95%

MAIN FEATURES

The Netgear WGXB102 Wireless Extender will add that extra boost of signal to your network.

OTHER INFO

Allow and deny certain hardware, IP, or MAC addresses from using the access point.

PRICE $107

www.netgear.com.

Netgear WGXB102 Wireless Extender

If you're working on the near edge of your Wireless-b/g network and you see some sporadic misbehavior or the throughput isn't to your liking, the Netgear WGXB102 Wireless Extender will add that extra boost of signal to your network.

The system runs on the theory of the old intercom systems that plug into the wall socket and carry their signal through the power lines. The WGXB102 does the same but in this particular case, a packet of data is sent through the wiring. From what we can tell, the units can communicate anywhere within the confines of your home or office as long the electrical wiring originates from the same source.

The two units offer WEP and WPA security, while a browser-based configuration program gives you the ability to allow and deny certain hardware, IP, or MAC addresses from using the access point. Although it will work with 802.11b networking, you can selectively set the devices to work solely with an 802.11g environment for a faster throughput.

If you've experienced the apparent lack of network services due to poor communications the Netgear WGXB102 if a feasible way to end your woes. The devices can be found on the internet for as low as $107. Get complete specs at **www.netgear.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Consider this appliance if you need to boost your Wi-Fi signal.

- No negative comments.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	100%
SUPPORT	100%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	98%

MAIN FEATURES

With its Bluetooth and Wi-Fi interfaces it can access the internet and play Real Video and Audio, MP3, MPEG-4

OTHER INFO

Includes a Wireless-B/G interface and includes an 800x480 resolution touch screen.

PRICE $350

www.nokiausa.com

Nokia 770 Internet Tablet

We were somewhat surprised with our first view of the Nokia 770 Internet Tablet. We knew what a tablet is and of course we all know the internet, but what happens when you mix the two? The result is a very interesting device that combines the two. This interesting appliance surfs the internet but falls short of being a personal computer.

With its Bluetooth and Wi-Fi interface, this device can access the internet and take advantage of many media file formats such as Real Video and Audio, MP3, MPEG-4 and standard image formats pictures such as JPEG and GIF. Although the tablet has the ability to display the pictures and other content from the internet, its ability to save the items is somewhat limited.

If you want to surf the web or listen to the internet radio in a Wireless-B/G environment, the Nokia 770 Internet Tablet is the device for you. Complete with a high resolution 800x480 touch screen, the ability to move around the internet its maneuverability is quite easy to accomplish.

If you're going to an internet cafe or any one of a number of world wide hot spots, then this device is just a right for you. The Nokia 770 Internet Tablet retails for around $350 and more information is available on the US Nokia web site at **www.nokiausa.com**.

BCM VERDICT

+ Great device for internet browsing and checking up on your email.

- Might be a bit too small if you have large hands.

EASE OF USE	95%
VALUE FOR MONEY	90%
SUPPORT	95%
OVERALL PERCENTAGE	93%

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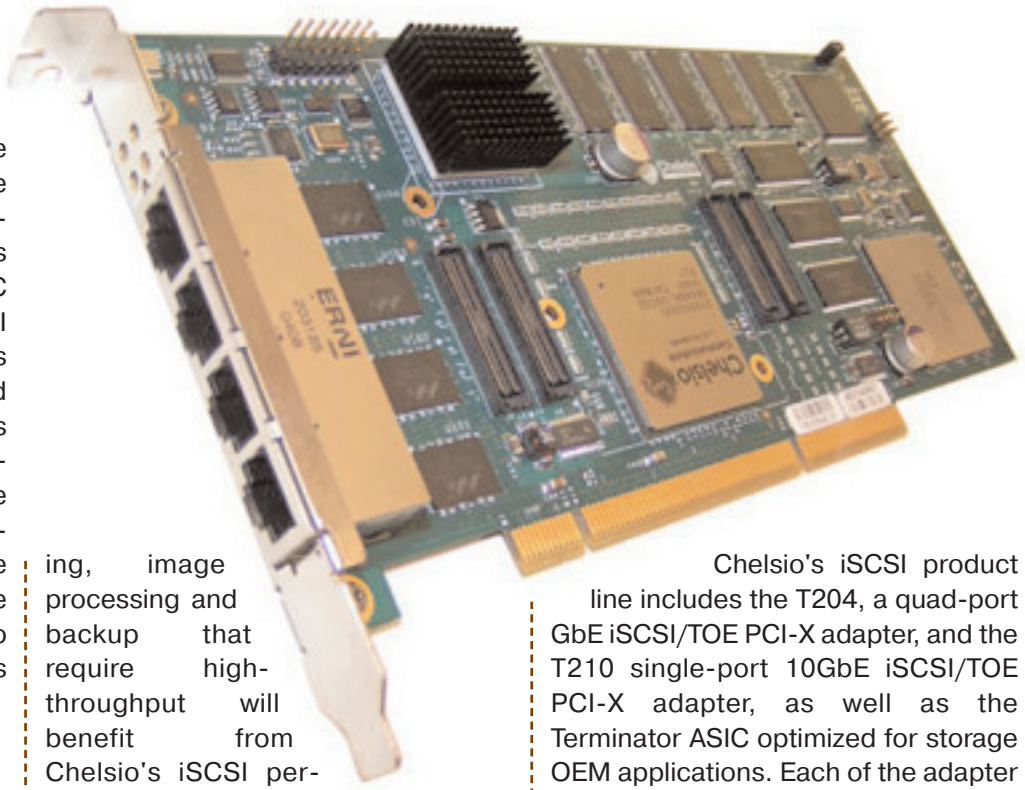
Chelsio Delivers Next Generation iSCSI Product Family Featuring Breakthroughs in Performance and Port Density

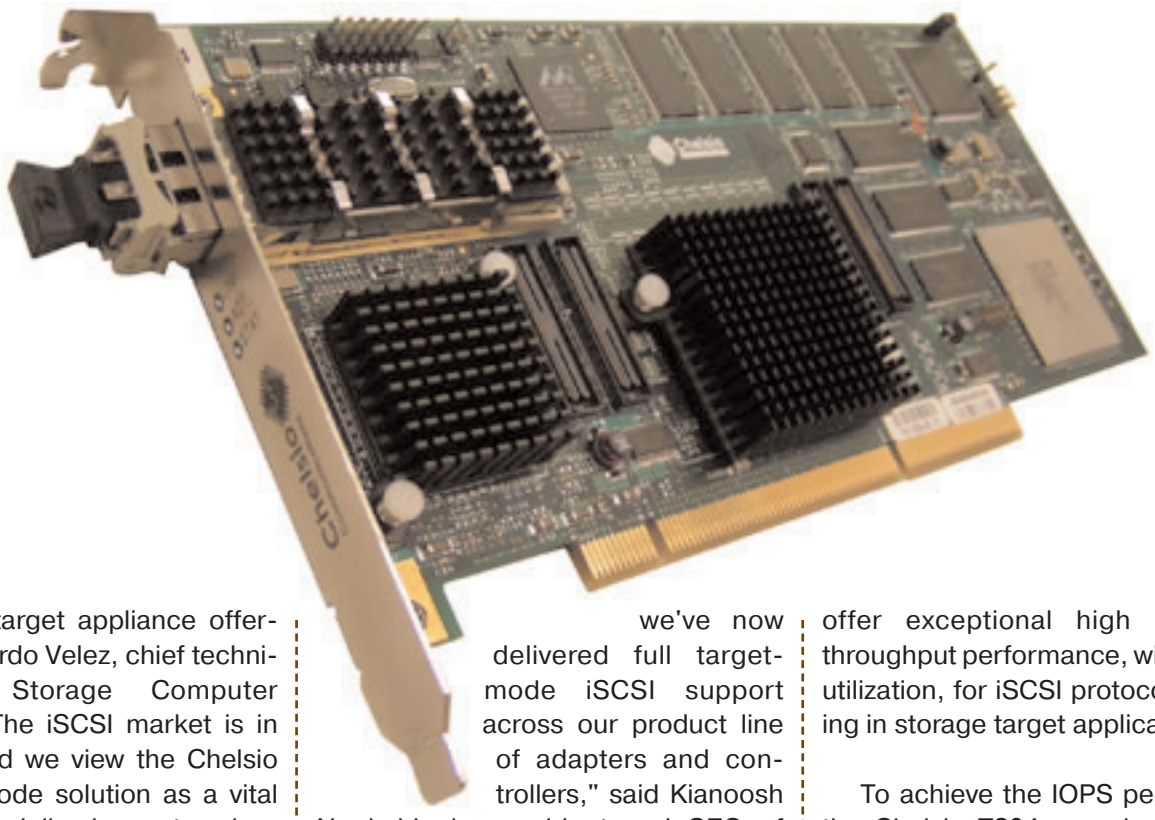


To meet the growing demand for IP-based storage networking, Chelsio Communications Inc. today announced a new commercial-grade iSCSI target stack that delivers more than 400,000 I/O operations per second (IOPS). Building on the strengths of its 2nd generation Terminator ASIC product line, the enhanced iSCSI product family provides storage OEMs with breakthrough performance and port density and greatly reduces design-in cost while maintaining complete software compatibility with the Chelsio product family. The newly-released stack is available as a free upgrade to all existing and future Chelsio products. In addition, Chelsio is making its Terminator ASIC chips available for OEM design-ins.

Several data-intensive applications on the market such as video streaming, image processing and backup that require high-throughput will benefit from Chelsio's iSCSI performance. Specific applications include SAN edge devices including storage arrays, storage-aware devices in the SAN cloud such as virtualization engines, and IP-based data centers based on the emerging blade server product category.

Chelsio's iSCSI product line includes the T204, a quad-port GbE iSCSI/TOE PCI-X adapter, and the T210 single-port 10GbE iSCSI/TOE PCI-X adapter, as well as the Terminator ASIC optimized for storage OEM applications. Each of the adapter and controller products feature full commercial-grade iSCSI target-mode support.

"Storage Computer is excited that Chelsio's unique iSCSI target-mode products are available for certification and deployment with our industry-



leading iSCSI target appliance offerings," said Ricardo Velez, chief technical officer, Storage Computer Corporation. "The iSCSI market is in ramp mode and we view the Chelsio iSCSI target-mode solution as a vital component for delivering enterprise-level IP SAN solutions to our storage OEM partners."

"The new Chelsio iSCSI offering complements our strategy of offering leading price/performance open storage solutions," said Barron Mertens, CEO of DSGStorage Inc. "A very high performance iSCSI target solution such as Chelsio's, together with the best hardware and support infrastructure available will make for a unique offering for our channel and customer base."

"By offering an integrated, high-performance iSCSI target stack, Chelsio is able take advantage of the price/performance benefits of volume server technology to provide Open-E with an range of options for developing industry leading iSCSI SAN solutions," said Krzysztof Franek, CEO of Open-E GmbH.

"Chelsio was the first company to introduce 10GbE and quad-port GbE iSCSI/TOE acceleration adapters, and we've now delivered full target-mode iSCSI support across our product line of adapters and controllers," said Kianoosh Naghshineh, president and CEO of Chelsio Communications. "Our second-generation products deliver record-breaking iSCSI IOPS performance and exceptional bandwidth capabilities due to our unique direct data placement capability, while retaining API compatibility with Chelsio's complete product family. In addition, we have now extended our business model to deliver our technology to embedded applications."

"Using its integrated iSCSI target stack and its range of adapter and controller options, Chelsio is well poised to address the variety of price points and applications which span the growing IP storage target market," said Tom Burniece, president of Burniece Consulting Services, a storage market analysis and consulting firm based in Los Gatos, Calif.

Chelsio iSCSI Solution Advantages

The Chelsio iSCSI stack is tightly integrated with Chelsio T204 quad-port GbE and T210 10GbE adapters to offer exceptional high IOPS and throughput performance, with low CPU utilization, for iSCSI protocol processing in storage target applications.

To achieve the IOPS performance, the Chelsio T204 was deployed in a link-aggregated configuration in an iSCSI target mode server powered by dual 2.4 GHz Opteron processors, the Chelsio iSCSI target stack, and a RAM disk. The target mode server was connected to 16 Windows 2003 servers running the Microsoft iSCSI initiator and the industry-standard Iometer tool was used for measuring 512-byte initiator reads and writes. Measurements on T204 showed a bandwidth of up to 3.9 Gbps with less than 20% CPU utilization, using standard 1500 byte Ethernet frames.

Pricing and Availability

The new Chelsio iSCSI target stack will be a standard feature of Chelsio T204 and T210 adapters and is available immediately for Linux 2.6.12 environments. Support for Red Hat 4 and SuSE Enterprise Server 9 environments is planned for Q4 2005. List pricing for T210-CX single-port 10GbE copper adapter is $1695. The T204 quad-port GbE copper adapter lists for $1495.

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The HP ProLiant BL20p G3 blade server with the Intel® Xeon™ Processor simplifies server management. In fact, it's so simple, you can even manage it remotely through leading Web browsers using HP iLO technology. And not only is it simple to manage, it's also simple to monitor and set up. It all starts with the Rapid Deployment Pack, giving you an automated setup process to configure and deploy servers at high volume and a rapid pace. Then HP Systems Insight Manager™ gives you a real-time overview of system performance, even alerting you to potential problems before they occur. Plus, you can bundle it with the HP StorageWorks MSA1500cs to make storing your data simple, scalable and affordable. So with HP, you get more expertise before you buy, more technology when you do and more support after. Wherever you happen to be.

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MF Digital offers $200 instant rebate on purchases of CD/DVD Printer - Copier combination

Buy a MF Digital PicoJet CD / DVD Printer and a 3000 Series SA DVD / CD Duplicator by September 30, 2005 and get a $200 Instant rebate.

E. Farmingdale, NY – Highlighting the automated capabilities of its CD / DVD standalone copier systems and CD / DVD printers, MF Digital has announced that it is offering a $200 instant manufacturers rebate on its Scribe SA 3000 Series standalone duplication systems when purchased in conjunction with its PicoJet Inkjet Printer.

The offer extends through the end of September, and applies to two-drive Scribe SA systems. Details of the promotion are available through local dealers of MF Digital equipment.

Awarded EMedia magazine's Editor Choice designation in the publication's December 2004 issue, the Scribe SA is a fully automated, industrial grade CD and DVD duplication system. Featuring an easy-to-use menu-driven ten keypad interface, the duplicator requires no additional PC connection. With a 600 disc maximum duplicator spindle, the Scribe can perform hours of unattended duplication operation. The Scribe system includes MF Digital's Command Center Module license-free client software to facilitate mass production duplication, controlling multiple CD / DVD duplicator standalone machines from a central local host computer, or even across a network. It also provides asynchronous duplication operations to a DVD / CD printer such as the PicoJet Inkjet Printer, with each drive burning and printing independently of each other.

MF Digital's PicoJet Inkjet Printer offers fully automated, direct-to-disc printing and is compatible with all MF Digital CD / DVD duplication solutions. With its 4800 dpi resolution, the PicoJet Printer brings photo-quality graphics and laser-quality text to the in-house production of CDs and DVDs.

Digital Control Systems Delivers Lowest Cost Yet with Model 307 CO2 Monitor

The AirSense™ Model 307 CO2 Monitor breaks the $200 price point making Demand Controlled Ventilation using CO2 Sensing more affordable.

The AirSense™ Model 307 CO2 Monitor breaks the $200 barrier with a retail price of $195. Digital Control Systems Inc continues to round out the AirSense line of CO2 Monitors with the new model 307 being the price leader. "We are excited about the reception the Model 307 has received in the marketplace," says Mike Mueller, founder of Digital Control Systems, Inc. (http://www.dcs-inc.net).

Aside from the new price point the Model 307 also has new features such as a single touch calibration procedure. The Model 307 has many of the same features as other AirSense™ CO2 Meters including a metal-chromated CO2 sensor housing. Like other AirSense™ products, the M307 CO2 Monitor also delivers data monitoring via a 0-10 volt output with optional 4-20 mA output available on request.

Demand-Controlled Ventilation (DCV) systems using carbon dioxide sensing have become increasingly more affordable. This is due in large part to widespread adoption of CO2-based DCV systems.

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While individual components of CO2 monitors have remained stable in price, the economy of scale has allowed CO2 monitor manufacturers such as Digital Control Systems, Inc. to pass cost savings on to end users.

The application of CO2 Monitors has also become more efficient as more systems have been installed. Digital Control Systems, Inc designed the M307 to maximize efficiency during installation and calibration resulting in lower labor costs. Also, the AirSense™ M307 was designed so that no damage is done if the unit is accidentally wired backward, it simply won't turn on, alerting the technician to reevaluate the wiring.

Digital Control Systems, Inc offers a complete line of CO2 Monitors and CO2 Sensors that are used in HVAC, Clinical, and Laboratory applications. This includes OEM equipment such as CO2 Incubators, and Greenhouse monitoring Systems. www.dcs-inc.net

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MaintenanceSoftware.info (http://www.maintenancesoftware.info) announces the release of its popular maintenance management software in open source format! This software is a computerized maintenance management solution (CMMS) suitable for manufacturing plants, industrial & commercial facilities and is now completely free!

"It's a big risk releasing CMMS software in a free open source format. So what's the catch? Catch is, if you download our maintenance software and decide to modify or improve upon it, all we ask is that you send us those improvements so that we can make the improved CMMS software available to others in the same open source format," says Cindy Maurer, CFO for MaintenanceSoftware.info.

Our CMMS Software is designed to be "fast", easy to install and simple to use so that users become productive sooner, not later. Both planned and preventive maintenance tasks can be scheduled, managed and tracked. An integrated inventory system allows one to track inventory use and when to reorder parts. Maintenance managers can plan ahead and budget work for the week, month, quarter, year or any defined period. One can easily create work orders and collect feedback on jobs done. Users rights to view or change information can be restricted to protect maintenance data.

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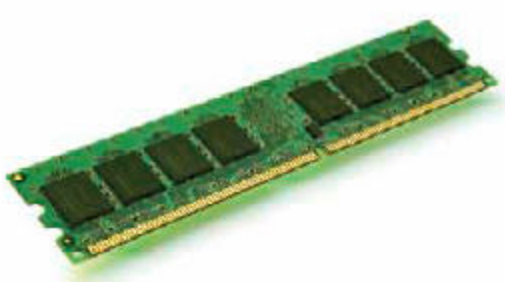

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IP Technology: the Likely Future of Contact Centre Markets

Of all the trends in the contact centre market in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA), the one that stands out is the geographical reorientation taking place there. Certain locations in Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Middle East and Africa are emerging as strong markets because of the distinct advantages they offer in terms of cheap manpower, inexpensive real estate, and sound infrastructure.

Global growth consulting company Frost & Sullivan (http://it.frost.com) estimates that the total market size of contact centres in the EMEA region was 34,674 in 2004. The market is likely to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of five percent to 44,574 by 2009.

While Western Europe is approaching saturation in terms of agent positions, Eastern Europe holds great potential to attract new business especially as the trend of outsourcing gains momentum. In fact, the contact centre market will see maximum growth in Eastern Europe, followed by parts of Middle East, Africa and Southern Europe.

"Although the new system shipment market is likely to shift towards Eastern Europe, Western Europe will see increasing demand for multi-channel applications and IP capabilities," remarks Frost & Sullivan Research Analyst Shomik Banerjee. "The release of capital expenditure for purchase of advanced technologies is the key to higher growth in the contact centre market."

Emerging IP technology and multi-channel communication are, in fact, likely to drive continued and strong demand for contact centre infrastructure. Multi-channel applications will benefit from the constant demand for new modes of communication that leverage the convergence of media. Adoption of these applications is likely to be particularly high in traditional contact centres.

With e-mail and Web chat applications fast gaining popularity, Frost & Sullivan expects multi-channel contact centre applications to account for 20 percent of the total shipments by 2009. The growth of these and other advanced applications is expected to drive adoption of IP contact centre solutions, which Frost & Sullivan estimates will grow to 17 percent of the total market shipments by 2009.

While IP solutions are widely believed to be the next big thing in the market and could offer significant cost savings, contact centres are still wary about migrating to IP technology due to the complexity of the environment and the strategic nature of customer communications.

"Since contact centres are typically risk-averse businesses, vendors will need to promote migration to IP as a way of capitalising on financial and business opportunities," notes Mr. Banerjee. "In addition, simple and cost-effective enablement of virtual and distributed architectures, a growing mobile workforce and the need for a flatter architecture for easier maintenance are likely to increase IP adoption over the forecast period."

With increasing adoption of IP, the contact centre market is likely to see greater virtualisation and consolidation in an effort to reduce operating expenditure (OPEX).

Among other important trends, the market is gradually shifting focus from efficiency to efficacy. As this happens, contact centres are likely to consider adopting IP technology to achieve the new targets of productivity enhancement and effectiveness in business processes.

Again, the imminent replacement of automatic call distributor (ACD) systems is also likely to trigger off the adoption of IP. Many of these systems were either installed or upgraded during Y2K and may need to be replaced now. This replacement cycle will contribute to a surge in system shipments till 2008.

Informal contact centres are also emerging as a strong market. Although this segment traditionally uses private branch exchange (PBX) hunt groups, the emergence of multimedia and IP is likely to create demand within it for high-end applications.

FROST & SULLIVAN

Kozio Supports MIPS32 Processor Architecture and VoIP Products; Expands Processor Architecture Support to Add to Networking, Broadband and VoIP Capabilities

Kozio, Inc., a leading provider of embedded software for system-level hardware testing, today announced plans for support of the MIPS32 processor architecture with general availability October 1. Kozio provides a comprehensive system-level test package for custom hardware platforms with fast delivery times for supported processors. Support includes the ability for Kozio to provide outstanding system-level test coverage for any hardware product using a MIPS32 processor. All Kozio products will be updated to include MIPS32 processor support.

The move to add this support was spurred by the company's growing relationship with key customers and the resulting need to provide a complete test solution for Voice-over-IP (VoIP) products. Kozio develops turnkey software solutions that verify design and validate hardware for any embedded single-board computer systems for a variety of applications, including networking and communications technology.

"Integrating support for the MIPS32 processor architecture continues Kozio's leadership position as the only embedded system-level test provider with the tools to accelerate board-level test," notes Kozio President Joseph Skazinski. "Our products help manufacturers and hardware designers reduce their effort while deploying more reliable technology faster than ever before."

The new release of Kozio's kDiagnostics software will support MIPS as well as offer complete digital signal processor (DSP) and VoIP test suites. Specifically, support will be added for:

- MIPS32 4K Core, a solution for multi-CPU system-on-a-chip designs, which are becoming increasingly popular in next-generation networking and broadband applications.
- Texas Instruments' TNETV1060 CPE Gateway Solution, a highly integrated software and silicon system-on-a-chip designed to address the requirements of residential and small office/home office (SOHO) gateways.

- Texas Instruments' programmable TMS320C55x™ DSP.

Kozio's new software versions will also deliver Foreign eXchange Office (FXO) and Foreign eXchange Subscriber (FXS) test suites for the two most common interfaces (ports or plugs) found in analog telephony environments

In addition to the general software release supporting the MIPS 32 architecture, Kozio also ports all of its comprehensive embedded system-level test products to custom platforms. This service is included with the price of a software license and can be completed, on average, in one week.

Go to Contents

Kozio delivers a complete diagnostics and functional test solution for hardware board bring-up, manufacturing test and production-ready power-on self-test through its products: kDiagnostics for system-level diagnostics of embedded designs; kMfgTest for automated embedded manufacturing and functional test; and kPOST for off-the-shelf Power-On Self-Test (POST). These solutions from Kozio provide more complete testing throughout the development process, resulting in fewer spins in the prototype stages and fewer defects in the final product. Boards move from design through prototyping and manufacturing to release in less time, with less cost and fewer defects.

Kozio's latest software release includes new, enhanced, and extended support for a variety of technologies across all its products. In the past quarter Kozio has added drivers and test suites for NAND Flash devices, Host and Device USB test suites, PCI bridge support, LCD support, expanded Altera FPGA support and enhanced Compact Flash support. These new features expand on the already extensive Kozio Test Library, enhancing the company's leadership role in providing the most comprehensive hardware test software for board bring-up, manufacturing test and power-on self-test (POST).

Sony Ericsson Bluetooth Headset HBH-608 Makes Handling Calls Via a VAIO PC a Breeze; New Headset Utilizes Sony VSIO BX Series and VoIP Technology

Call handling over the Internet has just been made a lot easier with the latest Sony Ericsson Bluetooth(TM) Headset HBH-608. Compatible with the Sony VAIO(R) BX series, Sony's line of VAIO Professional notebooks announced yesterday, the HBH-608 offers a solution that frees your hands while taking phone calls.

Bluetooth(TM) wireless technology connects the notebook with the headset, making it possible to handle calls over the Internet (VoIP) without connecting any phone cables. The acoustic construction of speaker and microphone in the HBH-608 ensures high quality sound, whether it is used with a computer or a mobile phone. Matching the VAIO design, the HBH-608 is small and lightweight with a talk time of up to 10 hours.

Sony Ericsson was the first company in the world to launch a commercial Bluetooth(TM) product and has already introduced several successful Bluetooth(TM) headsets on the market. Sony Corporation excels in computer technology with the VAIO BX series. "The knowledge from two strong brands in the communications industry comes together in this solution," says Ulf Persson,

corporate vice president for Sony Ericsson Accessories. "We believe that our joint experience benefits the user, making telecommunication as smooth as possible."

Using the HBH-608 with a VAIO is easy. You connect them via the computer's own software. The wireless connection allows you to move around freely since it works at a distance of up to 10 meters. The same headset can also be used with a Bluetooth(TM) mobile phone when you are out and about.

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Wireless

ARM Jazelle Technology to Enable Applications for New NTT DoCoMo FOMA Handsets

ARM today announced that ARM(R) Jazelle(R) technology will be deployed in a new line of FOMA(R) handsets by Japan's premier mobile communications company, NTT DoCoMo, Inc. Jazelle technology will enable the creation of innovative new consumer applications.

Emerging applications such as mobile games and business tools place increased performance and power demands on Java technology-enabled handsets. ARM Jazelle technology provides handset developers with Java acceleration, delivering improved performance and reduced time-to-market for advanced Java technology-enabled devices like FOMA handsets. Through ARM's partnership with Aplix Corporation, a global leader in deploying Java technology in mobile phones, ARM Jazelle technology is being adopted in the DoJa/Java platform for FOMA handsets, which is being jointly developed by Aplix and NTT DoCoMo.

"Java technology is a key component for innovative mobile handset applications," said Kiyohito Nagata, vice president and managing director of NTT DoCoMo's Product Department. "I believe that ARM's Jazelle Java acceleration technology will contribute to the creation of the ideal environment for powerful and versatile applications."

"In 2001, Aplix integrated ARM's innovative Jazelle technology, with JBlend, Aplix's Java platform product," said Ryu Koriyama, representative

director, chairman and CEO of Aplix Corporation. "Since 2003, products incorporating this fusion of Jazelle technology and JBlend have been adopted in a wide array of mobile communication devices. Today's announcement that NTT DoCoMo will implement these products in its FOMA handsets is a tremendous result for the ongoing technical cooperation between Aplix and ARM."

"Consumer demand for rich content and interactive applications without loss of performance or responsiveness is a key challenge facing mobile handset manufacturers and operators like NTT DoCoMo," said Takafumi Nishijima, president of ARM KK. "This latest development effort showcases how ARM's Jazelle acceleration technology and our partnership with a leading Java technology provider such as Aplix, enables manufacturers or operators to deliver innovative consumer applications."

ARM Jazelle DBX technology delivers an unparalleled combination of Java performance and the world's leading 32-bit embedded RISC architecture. This level of integration provides platform developers with the ability to run Java applications alongside an established operating system, middleware and application code on a single processor. This single-processor solution provides higher performance, lower system cost, reduced power, and more reliable operation at high frequency compared with coprocessor solutions and dual-processor (dedicated Java processor with native application processor) solutions or Java platforms using compilation techniques. The result is optimum performance, with a difference that users will feel unmistakably. ARM continues to develop fresh solutions that boost the performance and reduce the cost of Java platforms.92

Wireless

Boingo Wireless Partners With Opti-Fi Networks(SM) to Add 30 North American Airports to Wi-Fi Network

Boingo Wireless, a leading Wi-Fi service provider for business travelers, today announced a roaming agreement with Opti-Fi Networks(SM) that adds wireless networks at 30 North American airports served by Opti-Fi to the Boingo(R) Roaming System.

The agreement enables Boingo subscribers to gain high-speed wireless access at all of Opti-Fi's U.S. and Canadian airport locations, including Albany, NY, International Airport; Edmonton, Alberta, International Airport; Hamilton, Ontario, International Airport; Jackson Hole, WY, Airport, and many others from coast to coast. It also includes access at Airtran Airways gates at many major airports including Atlanta-Hartsfield International Airport; Baltimore-Washington International Airport; Chicago Midway Airport; and Miami International Airport. Plans call for the roaming partnership to expand to an additional 28 airports in the near future.

Airports are key locations for traveling Wi-Fi users. This agreement expands the number of airports in the Boingo Roaming System to 93 airports in North America and 169 airports worldwide. Boingo is the leading Wi-Fi aggregator providing wireless Internet access at more than 20,000 Wi-Fi hot spots worldwide.

"Airports are high-value locations because they are such natural and convenient locations for Wi-Fi usage, which makes adding as many airports as possible to the Boingo network a key strategy in our network development," said Colby Goff, senior vice president of network strategy for Boingo. "Partnering with top-tier providers such as Opti-Fi enables us to fulfill this objective with high-quality networks."

"Boingo is a premier global Wi-Fi company, and we are excited to be partnering with such a leader and innovator in the wireless market," said Roland Muse, Opti-Fi's chief executive officer. "As we strive to meet the demands of the airport market, we will continue to deliver enhanced connectivity and convenience to Boingo's customers."

The Opti-Fi business model allows airports to keep control of their local wireless spectrum while permitting selective access to outside network service providers. Opti-Fi's ManageAir(TM) and ManageAir Lite(TM) systems stand alone in delivering a Service Level Agreement (SLA)-quality network with unmatched security and reliability for both public and private WLAN users from anywhere in the airport.

Boingo gives business travelers the best choice of Wi-Fi hot spots by combining the locations of over 100 leading Wi-Fi operators into one worldwide network, thus allowing the user to roam onto any of these locations with a single subscription using Boingo's free Wi-Fi client software.

Boingo also partners with service providers to allow their users to access these hot spots through its Boingo Platform Services program. The program provides partners with a full suite of back-office billing, roaming, mediation and clearinghouse services to allow them to offer their own Wi-Fi service quickly and cost effectively. To date, the company has announced Platform Services partnerships with BT Infonet, Earthlink, Fiberlink, Nextel Communications, MCI, and Telecom Italia.

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